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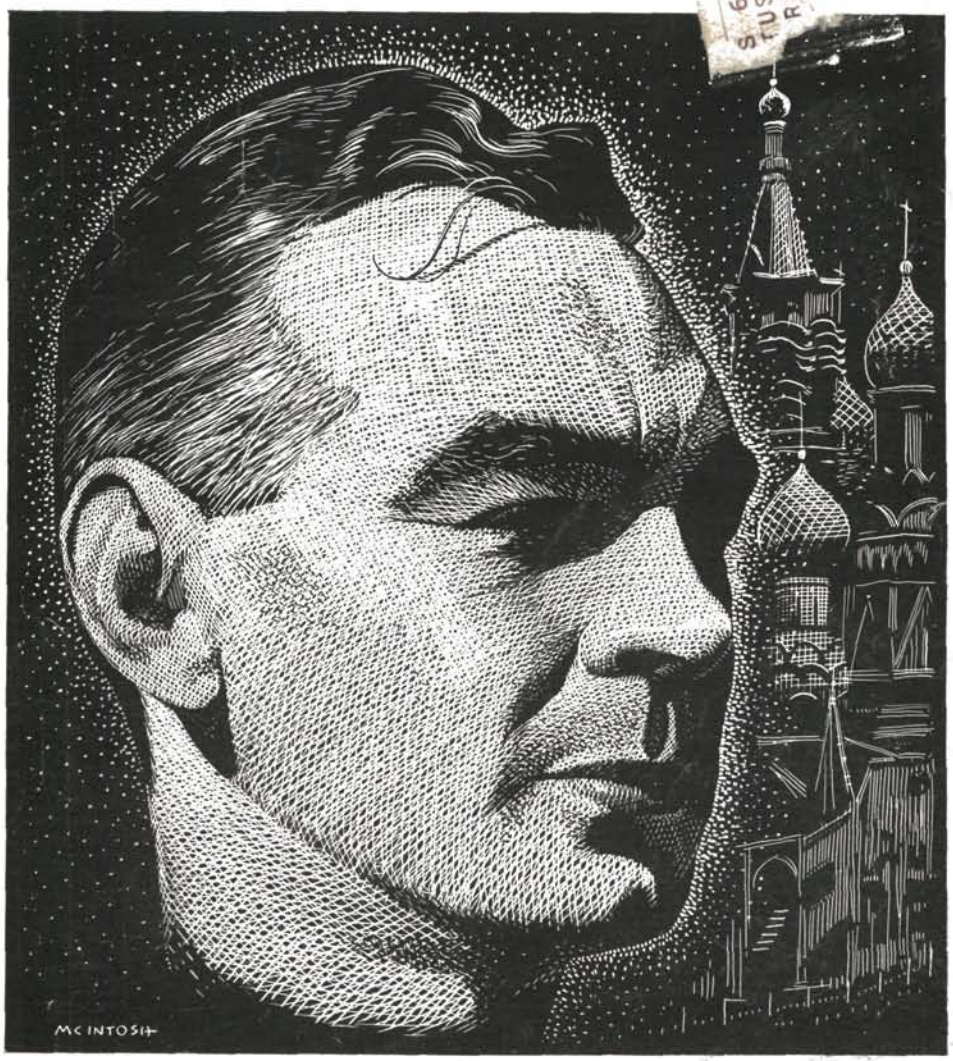
VOL. XXX No. 17 APRIL 26, 1947 FIFTEEN CENTS



John Fischer, author of "Why They Behave Like Russians." (See page 9)

Thoughts Among Marble

By IVOR BROWN

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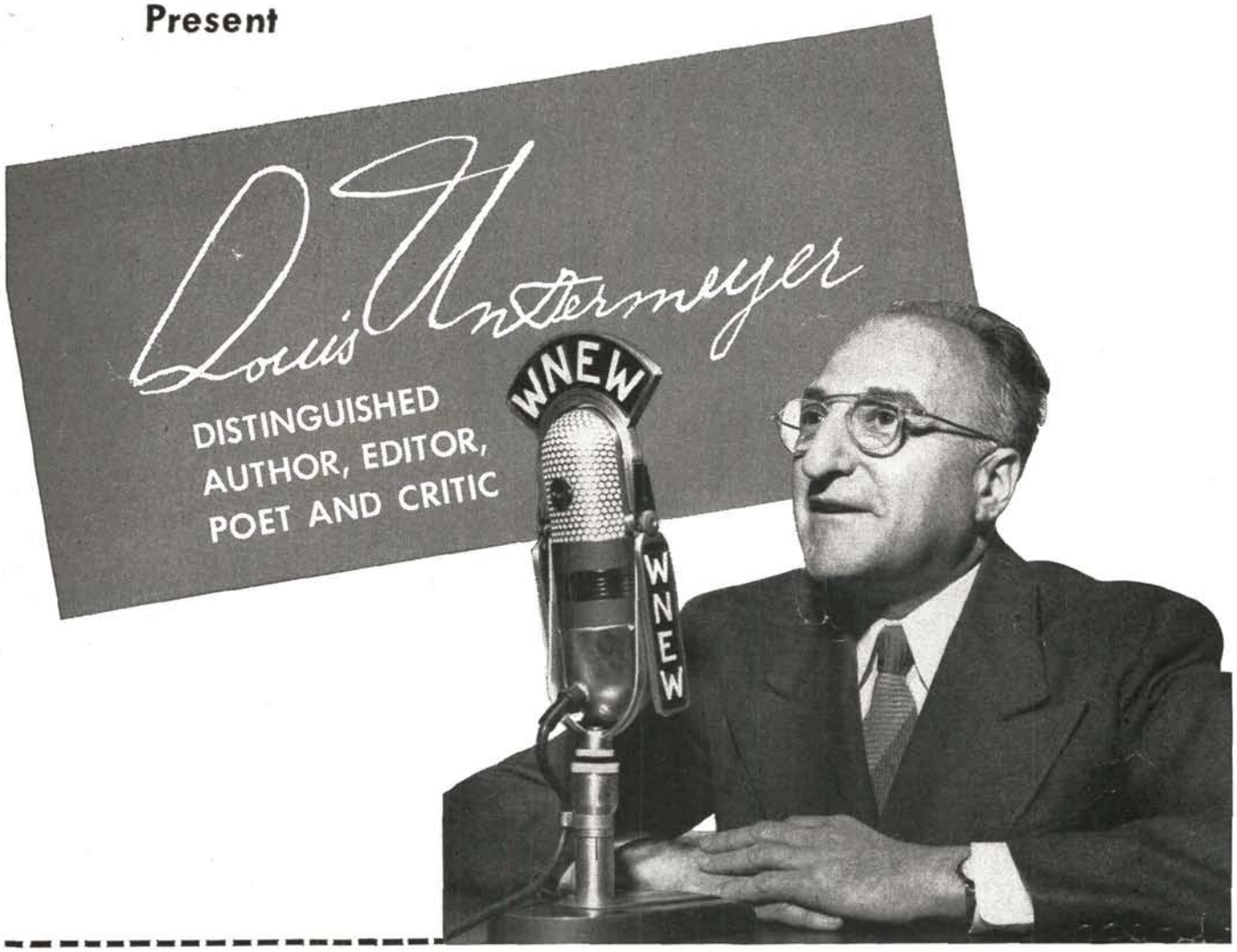

"LET'S BALANCE THE BOOKS"

A program, in Mr. Untermeyer's own words, "for anyone interested in any kind of book . . . a program that will range from books of the past to books of the moment, from the flippant to the profound . . . We hope to make it a friendly, even a gay affair . . . There will be games, quizzes, prizes and—in spite of ourselves—a few pure fragments of information."

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April 26, 1947

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Lilian Grannon, Assistant Treasurer; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Arthur Bodenheimer, Assistant Circulation Director. Subscriptions $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U. S. Vol. XXX, No. 17, April 26, 1947. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Entire issue, Copyright, 1947, by Saturday Review Associates, Inc. Registered United States Patent Office.

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TRADE Winds

IF EVER A CITY rates a column to itself in Trade Winds, it certainly is Dallas, Texas, for—man, woman, and child—the citizens of that gay and booming metropolis buy more books and accord more hospitality to visiting literati than any other place on earth. This is due partly to the fact that, in Elizabeth Ann McMurray, John McGinnis, Jimmie Albright, and Lon Tinkle, it harbors four of the outstanding personalities in the American book world. It is also due to the Dallasites' insatiable craving for culture. Good books, good paintings, good music not only stimulate their souls, but engender an intoxicating feeling of superiority over their hated neighbors in Fort Worth, thirty miles to the west. Their guide, cheerfully ackowledged by everyone, including himself, is John Rosenfield, the Woollcott of the Southwest. John traces the dotted line; the populace signs. Dallas was vaguely pleased when a local wit dubbed it "The Athens of the Alfalfa Fields."

In 1936, Texas staged a mammoth centennial celebration. Dallas wanted it very much; so did Fort Worth. Dallas won, and laid out a series of exhibits that plumbed deep in the arts of Texas. Fort Worth countered with a garden of beautiful girls, planted by an inspired horticulturist named Billy Rose, and broadcast its defi, "Dallas for education; Fort Worth for entertainment." That left everybody happy, particularly Billy Rose, who got a thousand dollars a day for his efforts, and was worth it. The only time they had to call out the Texas Rangers was when one incredulous patron hit the jackpot on a slot machine. The fair grounds were preserved in Dallas, and one of the country's best and fastest growing art collections is now housed there, directed by Jerry Bywaters. Rosenfield has a hand in it, of course. He also is the moving spirit in the flourishing Dallas Symphony. On his last birthday, the eighty members of the orchestra sent him individual wires of congratulation. After seventy-seven had been delivered, John opened one that read, "Thank God this will soon be over. (Signed) Western Union."

In the fall of 1946, Dallas tried its hand at a book fair, and because, as usual, everyone in town pitched in to make it a success, it went over with a bang. They're talking of another one this very moment. Because I regard book fairs in general with a jaundiced eye, I failed to climb on the bandwagon for this jamboree, thereby so deeply offending the civic pride of an unknown Dallas lady that she is still sending me insulting letters about once a month. . . .

PROBABLY THE MOST beautiful retail book store in the world is located in Dallas. It is the new Cokesbury headquarters, constructed by the Methodist Church in 1937, and operated under the shrewd direction of J. F. Albright. Its 1946 volume, including the mail-order department, was well over the million-dollar mark. Albright was sent to Columbia for two years by the far-seeing Cokesbury management when he was twenty-one. Then he worked a while at Baker & Taylor's, and with Sarah Ball and Frank Magel at Putnam's. Since 1927 he has managed the Cokesbury Store with a sure hand. His special delight is to single out a secondary title on a salesman's advance list and say airily, "I'll take a thousand copies." He thus has been the first to spot more than one future "number one best seller," although he himself admits, "I'm like La Guardia: when I do make a mistake, it's a beaut." Cokesbury is planning a three-story annex to its present plant, just to house its thriving juvenile department.

Down on Commerce Street is a bookshop of a very different character—McMurray's. The premises are small, and the shelves overcrowded, but Elizabeth Ann does the greater part of her business over the telephone. The whole town knows and loves her; visiting celebrities make a bee-line for her bailiwick; university librarians, society leaders, and newly minted millionaires from the oil fields buy the books she recommends. On her say-so, Whittlesey House reissued George Sessions Perry's first novel, "Walls Rise Up"; she personally sold out almost the entire edition. I have not read a jollier, more delightful story in years. . . .

ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S really great independent newspapers is the *Dallas Morning News,* with a crackerjack book page edited by John McGinnis and Lon Tinkle. Dining with the staff in the crowded and colorful lunch room was an experience! The following day we were entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Tom Gooch, of the *Evening Times Herald,* which also gives its book page more than average prominence. This page was the special delight of John William Rogers before he headed for Chicago; now it is carried on by the sparkling and just-married Anne Calhoun. . . .

PROBABLY THE MOST colorful figure in all Dallas is Everette Lee De Golyer, great good friend of the *SRL,* preeminent geophysicist, key man in oil administration in Washington during the Second World War, and owner of a fabulous library of works on the Southwest. Before his senior year in college, De Golyer crossed the border for the Mexican Eagle Oil Co. and promptly brought in the well that has produced more oil than any other

Successfully meeting E. De Golyer's challenge, "You're supposed to be funny, make us laugh," Bennett Cerf stands dead-pan as the camera catches his audience, consisting of (in the usual order) Mr. De Golyer, Mrs. Cerf, and Stanley Marcus. This photograph was taken in the editorial office of *The Dallas News.*

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THE ADVENTURES OF INKY X. TROVERT

in the world—130,000,000 barrels! At thirty-three, he organized with Viscount Cowdray the Amerada Petroleum Corporation. From that point on, the figures are too big for a book publisher to comprehend.

The De Golyer's six-year-old granddaughter is a chip off the old block. Mrs. De Golyer told her one day about her great-grandmother, something of a family legend. The little girl asked to see her. "You can't," said Mrs. De Golyer. "She's dead." The granddaughter asked, "Who shot her?" . . .

One of the most highly prized items in the De Golyer library is a thin volume by Ward Dorrance entitled "Wire from Missouri." Mr. De Golyer read the following excerpt aloud with obvious relish:

> An old gentleman, of this village, senator and patriarch, has for years made no secret of his labors upon a manuscript: "Preeminent Sons of Bitches of Boone County, Missouri." From season to season, publication is deferred because, at the moment when the author has wiped his pen, he invariably encounters a person whom he has not treated, whose exclusion would leave an edition less than definitive. . . .

LIKE SO MANY other cities, Dallas has its own sophisticated magazine which is attempting to emulate the dazzling example of *The New Yorker*. In Dallas, it is called *Scene*, and because its sponsors, Mr. and Mrs. Wayland Boles, are prepared to sink a half million dollars in it, there's no telling where it will go. The first issue, published in February, was a sell-out. Boles made a fortune with his invention of a household product called Sani-wax, which he later sold to another local celebrity named Clint Murchison. "That fellow Clint," a reporter told me, "just buys everything in sight." One of his more recent acquisitions, it appears, was a sizable block of stock in Henry Holt & Co.

I HAVE SAVED for last the Dallas institution that every woman visits first—the fabulous Neiman-Marcus store. It is really a collection of superb specialty shops under one roof, featuring merchandise that could be obtained only, if at all, by visits to a score of different establishments on Fifth Avenue, Michigan Boulevard, or Wilshire. Stanley Marcus, who directs its destinies, is constantly adding new lines. In Palm Springs, on a vacation, he discovered an Indian who created beautiful beaded belts, and contracted for his entire output for the next ten years. He located an unsung but matchless leather worker named Phelps in Greenwich Village and built him into the country's best-known exponent of his craft. Women come from New York and Hollywood to buy their wardrobes here. Lily Pons and "Slim" Hawks (recently voted the "best-dressed woman in America") wear practically nothing but Neiman-Marcus clothes. One lady recently flew down from Canada to purchase, of all things, a Neiman-Marcus fur coat!

Stanley Marcus, who incidentally was the leading factor in the establishment of the Texas Book Club, and who has named the lane on which he built his home "Nonesuch Road," after the English press, is frankly interested in the nation's "top five per cent." "Taste," he says, "is what we like." His stock is not only limited exclusively to the most luxurious merchandise in the country, but it is displayed by highly-paid and glamorous sales people who can charm the last five thousand out of a bewitched matron. The men's department is equally irresistible. In a happy daze, I found myself being slipped painlessly into a $150 sports suit, when my sanity was suddenly and miraculously restored. Besides, they didn't have my size. A Boston banker bought six blue shirts at thirty dollars apiece without batting an eyelash, but remembered to warn the clerk, "Please

(*Continued on page* 39)

"From where I sit"

A WESTCHESTER Family Robinson is in a car in the early nineteen fifties, driving toward New York along the Parkway, when a storm breaks out, paralyzing all traffic so it seems. Papa gets out of the car and finds everybody in the world except for a few people—dead.

From here on the story is hilarious, and why wouldn't it be with ROBERT LEWIS TAYLOR of *The New Yorker* fame writing **Adrift in a Boneyard.** In a letter written by him early in the project to one of our editors, he said of the book-to-be: "A note to assure you that I am making headway with the book. The characters (two Negroes, a Harvard economist, six spear carriers and a Chinese whore) are chasing each other around in my head, and it's only a question now of whether they'll get each other before they get me.

Now the problem, or conflict, as I think it's called in literary circles, is briefly this. The Chinese prostitute has temporarily come to rest in Bankok. She is living in a two-room suite at the local Y.M.C.A. with a Baptist missionary. Her son, who has been classified 4F by Chiang Kai-shek for having three heads—" And so on. Obviously it has nothing at all to do with the book. Nor, I find, do any of the other letters TAYLOR wrote to us. He was just warming up, so to speak, for the excitement he wanted to bring to the book itself.

I seriously believe that if these letters were to be framed and hung along the subway leading to the Senate Office Building, the boys in Washington would realize that we're living in one world after all, and they'd put a ceiling on heads.

If you think I'm being abstruse, read the book for yourself. Or better still, stick around to the early nineteen fifties and see how it feels to be on the Parkway all alone.

paul

DOUBLEDAY 50th Anniversary

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THE FINE ART OF EATING

"IN cooking for men, nothing is half so important as to keep in mind our primitive, basic, indoctrinated food habits. They underlie our tastes at a level below intelligence, predisposing us toward M. de Chateaubriand, so justly celebrated for the wasteful and delicious things he did to beefsteaks, and away from Count Tolstoy, who wrote better than the Frenchman, but ate worse.

"With women, it's different. They eat with their eyes, which is why Wilson Mizner was able to make a fortune out of a Miami resort by merely dressing up the already good food he had with parsley and paprika. Or they eat with their minds, as among the accursed tribe of dieticians. Men eat because it's fun and as an accompaniment to conversation; and as with any primitive form of fun, the closer they get to nature, the better they like it. But we are, in a sense, civilized; we do not like nature itself. Even the most elemental of Mr. Hemingway's heroes would revolt from a section of slightly spoiled meat cooked on a greenwood fire. A search of his citations on the subject, indeed, reveals that the most primitive dish he mentions is fried ham served with bread that has been fried in the ham fat, which is already pretty well up the scale in the direction of Keen's Chop House.

"Consider that you have fireplace, steak, wine, hunger, and girl, and wish to turn out a meal. She can help a little, but not much; tell her to slice the tomatoes, cut the bread, set the table—card table, probably—up near the fireplace.

"Remove the coat, roll up the sleeves, wash the hands, and rub salt and pepper into the meat. A thin coating of olive oil now goes over the meat; don't just pour, spread with the digits. It will not soak in, and the sensation on the fingers will wear away in time. Plop the steak on a heavy pan so hot it will spit if you put a drop of water on it. Let it sear about two minutes on each side without worry about the smoke and noise; reduce the heat and cook until it's done.

"A French dressing would be good with the salad (if it be salad) but is by no means necessary; the essential interests of taste are fulfilled by tomatoes themselves with salt and pepper. In fact there is no Mosaic law requiring that the accompaniment to steak consist of tomatoes. The desirable and needful adjunct to a steak dinner is something that will introduce a sharp, salty, and slightly bitter flavor into the combination to clear the palate and relieve the monotony of an uninterrupted consumption of meat—something which does not have so pronounced a flavor of its own that it will furnish a distraction from the main course.

"After a steak dinner most people like a dessert. It aids digestion and provides a nexus for postprandial talk, and a touch of sweet falls agreeably on a tongue that has just been discussing the sharps, bitters, and meat flavors of the main course. Serve up a dish of fresh fruit, say the innards of two oranges and a grapefruit, with a slug of Jamaica rum or kirschwasser added.

"Provide a pot of coffee and the cocktails—Martinis, please, quite dry. Rum cocktails, stingers, sidecars and Manhattans should be avoided before steak; they're all sweet. Sugar is one of the most useful flavors in the arsenal of the cook, but also one of the most persistent. Once one starts on it, the flavor of anything that does not contain sugar is killed.

"Wine list, then—cocktails before dinner, a half-bottle of red wine during it, a brandy or other non-sweet liqueur with the coffee, and the eaters will be left with the feeling of having eaten really well which most Americans have experienced only abroad. The overall criticism of the average big American dinner is that it too often leaves the diners stuffed, bloated, torpid — and hungry again in a couple of hours.

"The meal above will leave anyone fully satisfied but completely functional.

"Never mind the recipes but learn a few basic methods, a few of the possible and impossible combinations, and make up your recipes as you go along. You'll have better eating."

(The above are some random paragraphs taken from this delicious book about eating.)

A MAN AND HIS MEALS

AT ALL BOOKSTORES
HENRY HOLT & COMPANY

BY FLETCHER PRATT AND ROBESON BAILEY
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The Saturday Review of Literature

Thoughts Among Marble

IVOR BROWN

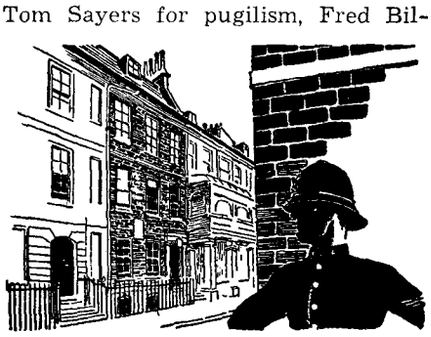
LIVING in Hampstead, London, N.W.3 at the corner of Well Walk and at an altitude of 400 feet, we breathe a purer air—or so it is alleged and seems—than most metropolitans; also a most "littery" one; our altitudes are not of the map only. Mind has always been on the up-and-up in these parts. It was, after all, the Nightingale Belt to John Keats, who once lived opposite my house and later just down the hill; Shelley joined Leigh Hunt for light refreshment of body and soul in the nearby Vale of Health and sailed boats for the children on the region pond; Constable looked hence onto a Heath that was truly rural and saw his galleon clouds from a window across the road. In my own time Sturge Moore (known to his own and these, I fear, not many) would pop out like an elderly faun to put a new sonnet in the post. Mr. Priestley strolled to fame and fortune from a large red-brick mansion slightly to the N.E. of the Constable perch, and a few yards from there Dr. Joad still strokes a philosophic beard and emerges, on Sunday afternoons, paunchy but nimble, to play hockey with the young upon the public grass and even, at fifty-five, to out-dart them in this (to me) odious exercise.

So you cannot take a stroll round hereabouts without cultural reminders and, since the obvious stroll is across the heath to Highgate, you keep culture-crashing all the time. Perhaps Fleet Street and culture are hardly synonymous, though many of the wise have served their sentence in the Fleet Prison. However that may be, Highgate bound, I dip to cross the River Fleet, here about two feet wide and liable to vanish in a hot summer. This historic runnel tumbles out of the Vale of Health, meanders through the Hampstead ponds, famous for Mr. Pickwick, sticklebats, and the nightingale that evoked the Ode, and percolates (taking the form of a drain) north and central London, where it becomes of old the Fleet Ditch and so named the street of newspapers. It still tumbles invisibly into the Thames near Shakespearean Blackfriars. It can hardly be as filthy now as when Pope wrote of its mouth, beside the gaol where harlots were whipped:

> This labor past, by Bridewell all descend,
> (As morning-pray'r and flagellation end)
> To where Fleet-ditch with disemboguing streams
> Rolls the large tribute of dead dogs to Thames,
> The King of Dykes! Than whom no sluice of mud
> With deeper sable blots the silver flood.

Still, by its source and in its Hampstead reaches, this willow-bordered rivulet is a pretty trifle. Was Thames, by the way, silver in Pope's day? Are large, flat-country rivers ever of this tint? Is the Danube ever blue? But I paddle in inelegant waters.

My walk might be up to Highgate Village (Coleridge and more Priestley) or it may swing southward a little to Highgate Cemetery where it is my custom to mooch about among the square mile of marble, the family mausolea, the sepulchres of money-barons, and the last home of so much solid bourgeois striving. Here lie the Victorians, English, Jewish, German, —foreign names abound—in graves broad and narrow, quiet and vulgar, austere or angel-girt, proclaiming the source of the tenants' past prosperity as well as their hope of salvation to come. The professions have their corners, George Eliot, D. G. Rossetti, and Herbert Spencer lie there for letters, Tom Sayers for pugilism, Fred Billington for the stage. He was the great Savoyard droll, the massive Yorick who set the Gilbert and Sullivan public so long, so richly, in a roar. But largely it is a mercantile assembly that lies here upon the huge southward slope of Highgate's timbered and enchanting hill.



Highgate's link with Free Enterprise is hundreds of years old. It has the most bourgeois of all patron saints, that of Richard Whittington, merchant prince so keen a royalist and patriot that he absolved Henry V from paying his war debts to the City of London. This was the Henry later commended to fame by Shakespeare and Mr. Olivier. It is possible, however, that Richard, when he made his great gesture and tossed the IOU's into the fire under the royal eyes, had a shrewd notion that he would never get the money anyway. Perhaps, again, he had dined too well and was sorry in the morning.

THE huge cemetery, inevitably mournful, is yet a fascinating spot. The war interrupted its tranquillity and removed its gardeners. It is now, inevitably, rather less kempt. Some of the great family vaults—labeled, in the high Roman manner, catacombs—have a tumbledown air. Here and there a German bomb has fallen, leaving a ghoulish crater among marble shattered or in collapse, and has provided some of the dead with a violent and unexpected form of resurrection. You can wander there for hours, so vast is the sprawl of this necropolis. And you might miss, even then, the target of my periodical excursion, which is the grave of Karl Marx. Yes, here, in a narrow slit among the larger tombs of the merchant princes, lies still the brain which, over nearly half the world, has shattered that mercantile dominion. Lenin may be in the Kremlin, a mummy almost canonized, a goal for mass-pilgrimage, receiving the obeisance of the Marxian millions. But Marx himself is here in Highgate still, sharing with three

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"The City of London," dry-point by Graham Clilverd.

"Once there was a stinging shower, and then a double rainbow of rare brilliance planted one end of its fantastic self . . . upon St. Paul's . . . [making] the huge, carnal, huckstering town below look like a verse from the Book of Revelations."

others six foot by four—the scantiest ration—of London's bourgeois clay.

It is a secret nook. Ask the attendant at the southern gate as I did recently, having missed my way, and he said briskly—

> Marx? Yes, straight on, then first left, second right, and look for the name of Scrimmage. Then look in behind that. Don't expect no big stuff or standing-up stones. It's a flat job.

So, following the instruction, I reached Scrimmage, who, in fact, turns out to be the ancient house of Scrymgeour, suitably entombed, and behind that discover again the tiny plot and the stone (a flat job) which announces:

> Jenny von Westphalen (1814-1881)
> beloved wife of
> Karl Marx (1818-1883)
> Harry Longuet (1878-1883)
> Helena Delmuth (1833-1890)

The registration number is 24748. As a rule there are a few bunches of withering red flowers (according to season) left there by the faithful. Sometimes, especially on Sunday, you may see a stationary Comrade deeply engaged in a mixture of thought, reverence, and vigilance: he looks suspiciously at strangers and then withdraws behind the iron curtain of his contemplation.

Marx married well, as the bourgeois say. His Jenny—strange Christian name for a Von Westphalen and explained by some tincture of Scottish blood in her—came of the prosperous gentry. She endured with him persecution and poverty; it does not seem that she brought money—or at least lasting money—with her. No doubt her family saw to that. The couple lived very sparely in North London after their stormy years in Germany, Switzerland, and Paris. Was the old rebel duly appreciative? One hopes that he sometimes murmured, as he wandered away to that forging-house of "Das Kapital," the reading room of the British Museum,

> Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
> Say that health and wealth have missed me,
> Say I'm growing old, but add
> Jenny kissed me.

There was once a legend among the senior members of the British Labor Movement that Marx possessed a reasonable thirst and had a habit of lingering in bars. Did his learned lieutenant Engels have to elbow him tactfully homewards, urging the need for another chapter tonight, while Karl protested that they must have "one for the road"?

But we must return to the "flat job." Little Harry Longuet was a grandson, one of the Marx girls having married the French Socialist Longuet. The youngest daughter Eleanor, who married the cadging, womanizing, but apparently very likable Dr. Aveling—partly the model for Dubedat in "The Doctor's Dilemma"—was well known to Bernard Shaw and so links us with contemporary letters. Helena Delmuth I guess to have been a companion-devotee who helped in the Marx house. Nearby there is another "Red" memorial, that of Douchan Popovitch (1884-1918), Serbian socialist leader. This was erected by his Yugoslav friends in what, presumably, they deemed to be ground sanctified by proximity to Marx. All round, apart from Popovitch, are couched the London merchants and lawyers and the simple family parties in their shared sepulchres, as cosy and domestic as such a state can be. There are the Buttles, for example, proudly labeled "Dear Dad" and "Our Mum," closer even to Marx than is Red Douchan Popovitch. Death levels all distinctions, they say and shrivels party labels; so perhaps the Buttle relatives—should they be anti-Red—feel no contagion.

Once, as I walked away from this odd propinquity, there was a stinging shower, and then a double rainbow of rare brilliance planted one end of its fantastic self behind Highgate Hill, the other, away to the southeast, upon St. Paul's. It was queer that the symbol of promise should suddenly appear and make the huge, carnal, huckstering town below look like a verse from the Book of Revelations. It was weather for angels; the billowing clouds might have tumbled cherubim. And there, on this consecrated ground and under so theological a sky, lay Karl Marx, who, not believing in these things, believed in others so strongly that, dying just sixty years ago, an exile little known, he is now almost the god of the godless and has worship over continents.

YET how many of the millions who call themselves Communists have waded through "Das Kapital"? How many have even struggled through a third of it? Surely none of the books that have altered history was ever less read. Tom Paine's work stirred the world; but he was a best seller from the start. Far more, I suppose, have perused the Communist Manifesto of 1847, issued by Marx and Engels after they had turned the old and feeble "Federation of the Just" into the new and vigorous Communist Federation. At least millions can quote its final roll of drums, "You have only your chains to lose and all the world to win." It is certainly a masterly tract; the combination of history with exhortation is admirably concise and calculated, in length and spirit, to appeal to the literate worker who wanted something more rational and more scientific than the old Utopian Socialism of Natural Rights and magical formulae based thereon. In any case, it worked; the storms of 1848 were the thunder to this lightning.

Much of the Marxian prophecy holds. As early as 1847 Karl proclaimed the recurrent slump we know so well:

> Industry and commerce seem to be destroyed—and why? Because there is too much civilization, too

(*Continued on page* 33)

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Attention, War-Mongers!

WHY THEY BEHAVE LIKE RUSSIANS. By John Fischer. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 262 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by JULIEN BRYAN

JOHN FISCHER takes a middle-of-the-road position in his book "Why They Behave Like Russians." He has not weighted it heavily in favor of the Soviets as have the Webbs or Ella Winter or Lauterbach or Albert Rhys Williams. On the other hand he does not reveal the extreme bitterness and one-sidedness of Barmine and Kravchenko. On this account his book will undoubtedly receive serious criticism from extremes on both the right and left. The leftists will be angered at certain terms like "The Scared Men in the Kremlin," which was to have been the original title of the volume. Our rightists in America like George Earle, former Governor of Pennsylvania who is openly advocating immediate war upon the Soviets, will be surprised to find Fischer pointing out that the Soviet Union is extremely weak and neither wants nor can afford a major war for many years.

Fischer's detailed descriptions of his own personal experiences in the Ukraine during the summer of 1946, while working with UNRRA, are interesting and the best part of his book. He had a chance to observe several hard working Soviet officials at close range for two months, a chance which few Americans have had in Russia since the days of Hugh Cooper and the building of the great dam. In his description of Vassily Khomyak, the Ukraine's top man in charge of all UNRRA activities and liaison with the foreign staff, Fischer leads off with an unfortunate *Time* magazine touch, "Khomyak would grit his stainless steel teeth." But the rest of the pages devoted to this Russian official describe him as a most conscientious public servant, a man of endless patience who worked extremely long hours. Fischer gives the Ukrainian official great praise in saying that Khomyak's organization, in spite of incredible obstacles, somehow

> got its work done with considerable efficiency. Every month it routed some 25,000 tons of relief supplies from the Odessa and on the whole the right things got to the right places on time. Moreover losses from pilferage and careless handling were notably small and swiftly punished. If there was any blackmarketing or graft in UNRRA goods we were never able to discover it.

This is praise indeed after all the criticism of UNRRA in America.

His chapter on Pavel Purobayev, "a small-time secret agent" attached to the Kiev UNRRA mission, is interesting and very entertaining. However I also happen to have worked with Mr. Purobayev for more than a month and personally I am convinced that the old chap's primary job was not as a secret agent at all but rather to serve as a spark plug and trouble shooter for the staff of the UNRRA mission. As Fischer himself admits, "No government in its right mind would have dreamed of using him [Purobayev] to steal a radar blueprint." Then I think that Fischer would also admit that the UNRRA mission had a kind of League of Nations status anyway and therefore there were not many top secret plans to be kept hidden.

It is too bad that John Fischer has not given us many more first-hand descriptive accounts of his recent experiences in the Ukraine. For he did have these experiences and unfortunately only a few are recounted here, less than twenty per cent of his entire book, I should judge. In the remaining two hundred pages of this volume John Fischer is interesting in his bold analysis of present-day conditions in the Soviet Union and his equally bold conclusions as to what we in America should do about that country. It is quite possible that he is correct in certain of these opinions and conclusions. But he has disregarded his own advice in the introduction to his book when he modestly suggested that "there are no experts on Russia, only varying degrees of ignorance." For Fischer's book is not modest. He has almost all the answers.

My principal criticism is that of method. Here is a man who has obviously read many of the important books written on the Soviet Union, and who has actually made a special study of the subject. Certainly such a man is qualified to write a book about Russia, based upon his considerable reading, without ever having visited the country. The danger, it seems to me, is in Fischer's giving the reader the impression that all of these conclusions, and this extensive knowledge of Soviet agriculture, industry, Kremlin policy, the Soviet Army, etc., are the result of his own first-hand observation. For example in his chapter called "The Happy Peasant" he gives an extensive analysis of the ups and downs of Soviet agriculture. Fischer spent only two months all told in Russia and only a short time visiting the peasants and collective farms. But he nevertheless mixes his brief first-hand observation of agriculture with his wide reading and the result is confusing. You are led to believe that Fischer saw all of these things with his own eyes. This is an old device in writing

THE AUTHOR: If tall, spare John Fischer hadn't early learned to take a bifocal view of controversial issues, he'd probably suffer psychic combustion, what with two fighting grandfathers—one Confederate, one Union. He was even born on a borderline (Texas-Oklahoma) April 27, 1910. Although his parents transplanted him to Idaho when a child, he regards himself as Texan, and still calls ladies "mam" in a voice like black chocolate. After graduation from the University of Oklahoma he worked for numerous Southwestern newspapers. It wasn't dull. With the dust-bowl depression rampant, assignments were equal parts society luncheons and murders. He won a Rhodes Scholarship in 1933 ("nobody else was applying") and studied pricing in a collective economy. While at Oxford he wrote articles for *Harper's Magazine* and UP and collaborated on a book about the theory of money. A last-paragraph decision of the authors that they didn't know anything about their subject left the tome in limbo. Accepting a cabled offer from the Department of Agriculture with an impulsiveness not characteristic of him, he quit England, pausing only to complete wedding plans with the prettiest Scottish girl he knew. He worked for AP, 1935-37, then returned to the Government bureau for five years. He helped organize the Board of Economic Welfare's intelligence service, studied Russian economy, and headed lend-lease in India. In 1944 he became a *Harper's* editor and settled down in White Plains, N. Y., with his family, planning to "putter around with carpentry" and raise vegetables in a plot "not big enough to spit across." UNRRA beckoned and the temptation to travel freely in Russia was too much. Next winter he hopes to make an independent tour of India.

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and a dangerous one. Will Durant used it years ago when he crossed Siberia on a hurried trip and then wrote a book with all the answers about the Soviet Union. My guess is that Mr. Durant had written most of it before he made his trip. But his brief excursion into the country gave the book a special kind of authority, a feeling of "I saw all this myself."

John Fischer has done much the same thing. This I think is too bad, for it will hurt his book and its reception. Actually there is much merit in this small volume, much that should be useful today in bringing about a better understanding between our two countries. With a few exceptions the book is fair to the Russians and takes a kind of solid, middle-of-the-road position which is needed today. He is not emotional or wildly prejudiced either for or against the Soviet. I recommend the book as required reading for all war-mongers.

As for the now famous quarrel between John Fischer and the UNRRA officials which has already been aired in the press, I understand that the UNRRA officials claim Fischer promised to publish nothing until the official demise of UNRRA. Fischer, I gather, claims that he made no such promise. But one thing is clear from my own recent visit to the Ukraine and that is that the work of the UNRRA mission in Kiev has been seriously embarrassed by his action. This is too bad, for relations between the outside world and the Soviet Union are ordinarily difficult enough. It is too bad because these two UNRRA missions in Kiev and Minsk were doing a remarkable job on international good will. Composed of British, Scotch, New Zealanders, and Americans, they were literally the only missions of any international organization which were permitted to operate within the Soviet Union. If I am informed correctly, Fischer's articles in *Harper's* provoked the only serious misunderstanding which took place.

It will be interesting to watch the comment of *Pravda* on this book. For Ilya Ehrenburg, famous Soviet writer, has just published his American memoirs. These have been printed here and contain many caustic as well as friendly remarks about the United States. But in Ehrenburg's there is a real ray of hope. For he is the first Soviet writer for many years who has been permitted to make extensive favorable comments about the United States. I should say that he and Fischer make their favorable remarks about each country in approximately the same proportion. Let us wait and see if *Pravda* brings out any of Fischer's praise.

In conclusion I have one question for John Fischer: Why do all of us Americans who go to the Soviet Union feel obliged to come back home with the answer to every imaginable question, including what the Kremlin will do next. I for one would like some day to read a modest book about Russia, written by an American, a book which describes vividly and freely what the writer saw and did and what the Russian people said to him. Without great far-reaching conclusions and long-range prophecies. Maybe some day such a book will appear. It would help.

Julien Bryan, world traveler and lecturer, has just returned from his ninth extended tour through the USSR as free-lance photographer. One of his well-known documentaries —the bombardment and fall of Poland—was released by Pathé as the film "Siege." He has also done documentaries in Asia and South America.

Disarmament—Key to Peace

APPEAL TO THE NATIONS. By Norman Thomas. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 175 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by FOSTER RHEA DULLES

IT is very depressing to read current books on the international situation in this "time of troubles" in which the world finds itself. Almost invariably they fall into three sections—a penetrating analysis of the conditions making for war, a critical exposure of the inherent weaknesses in our foreign policy, and an eloquent presentation of the author's own program for maintaining peace. The disappointment is in the third section when the reader, approaching this phase of the discussion with the realistic viewpoint inspired by the earlier parts of the book, finds himself baffled and confused by inadequacies to which the author, now turned propagandist, has seemingly blinded himself.

This moving and eloquent "Appeal to the Nations" by the leader of American socialism falls very much into this familiar pattern. Mr. Thomas dramatically outlines the problem, and his chapter on the "Seedbeds of War" is realistic and convincing. Can we then achieve peace through the United Nations, through the fear inspired by new engines of warfare, through world government? Can it be obtained either by a preventive war on the one hand, or by appeasement of Soviet Russia on the other? Mr. Thomas in each instance thoroughly examines these programs and then rejects them, either because of their impracticality under present conditions or the likelihood that they would lead to the very war which they are designed to prevent.

At this point—and I am paraphrasing the author's own realization of the reader's baffled discouragement—it may well be asked: where is there any hope? Mr. Thomas thereupon declares that the minimum price of peace is disarmament and the liquidation of imperialism. In the brief thirty-seven pages (less than a quarter of the book) that he has left himself for constructive proposals, he optimistically asserts that in this program the way may be found to do away with international war. The world-wide desire for peace, and fear of war, are not sufficient in themselves either to make the United Nations workable or to enable us to establish a better world government, he writes, but "they warrant the confidence that men aroused by one clear trumpet call and organized on a simple program may rapidly realize the age-old dream of peace."

Mr. Thomas's idealism and sincerity are indisputable, and there is an eloquent persuasiveness about his appeal for disarmament. It is easy to agree with him that not until the nations do disarm can there be any real peace. But isn't a sense of security a necessary prerequisite? Can there be any real hope of universal disarmament (supplemented, as Mr. Thomas also suggests, by a world peace force set up along the lines of Ely Culbertson's quota principle) until political settlements are reached removing the tensions and fears that make for armaments? This is not to suggest that disarmament should be ignored. It is so intimately related to security that it should be part and parcel of all political settlements. But no great nation would today be willing to disarm unless it felt that its safety were assured by stronger guarantees than the armies and navies it agreed to scrap, however illusory such defenses might really be.

In being at once so sceptical of other paths to peace and so unrealistic in respect to disarmament, Mr. Thomas appears to be inconsistent. While any step towards disarmament would be a great gain, there is little likelihood that it can be fully achieved until we have so strengthened the United Nations—the one existing agency for world peace—that effective world government has become a realizable goal.

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—Clare Leighton.

What Dixie Is and Why

THE WAY OF THE SOUTH. By Howard W. Odum. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 341 *pp.* $3.

INTO THE MAIN STREAM. By Charles S. Johnson and Associates. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1947. 333 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARK S. WATSON

IT seems a long time since we have read any discussion of the South which failed to use Talmadge or Bilbo or McKellar or "Tobacco Road" as a point of departure, if not as a central theme, and it is half incredulously that one finds in the month's new issues two thoughtful studies of what Dixie is, and why. It is a coincidence that Dr. Odum's latest book is published in the same week as that of Dr. Johnson and his associates whose survey is one of the fruits of the Southern Regional Council, whose first president Dr. Odum was.

Dr. Odum's sensible thesis is that the way of the South was not chosen overnight. It, like the way of other great areas, or of any individual, is the result of a great many causes operative for a great many years. Accordingly his early chapters relate, in a style which is partly Whitmanesque and partly King-James-Version, the far-reaching background and basis of today's South—the rich endowment by nature, the influence of the frontier life, and the succession of migrations, down from the Middle States, out from the Tidewater plantations, upriver from New Orleans, all of them combining to produce individualism, personality, strong allegiance, love of freedom, and not too much patience with organization or formal control or finished standards of art, education, and work—to cite some of the items in Dr. Odum's catalogue of the frontier qualities. These characteristics were quite different from those bred by the plantation economy, which overlaid the other economy but never engulfed it.

The contributions which the planter aristocracy made to American ideals and American independence and government need not be chronicled again. Nor need the abiding results of that "cotton economy" which produced great wealth and great waste and great misery. Nor should it be necessary to do more than note the fact, as does the author, that there soon came about a four-class culture in which the barriers between aristocracy, middle-class white, poor white, and Negro slaves were high and wide.

Yet the fact itself, or certainly its influence, seems to have eluded those hot critics of the South who are furious at the sorrows which undeniably exist today, but who neither understand the causes nor know how much has been done in past decades to right the wrongs and to whittle down the causes themselves. One cannot say it better than does Dr. Odum himself in discussing the South's reaction to its most passionate and misinformed critics:

> Over against the outside verdict of denunciation, the South was thinking all along that it had made great progress toward better race relations. . . . Many things were being done, as a matter of fact, in racial fellowship which a short time ago would not have been considered. There was less and less violence and more and more inclination to increase the Negro's participation in all matters economic and cultural.
>
> There were increases in appropriations for Negro education, often as much as fifty and one hundred per cent. Teachers' salaries were more and more being equalized. . . . Hope was being expressed that a new era was in the making.
>
> Then suddenly, as it appeared to the South, there was a flood of criticism, denunciation, demand. Measures of coercion were proposed which seemed to assume that the South was doing something new and quite bad in its whole pattern of biracial culture. . . . Instead, in the light of a normal and logical period of development, of being credited with substantial measures of progress, the South found itself in wartimes reflecting, relatively, retrogression in comparison with the commitments of the American people to global democracy. . . . The South, too, needed sympathy and understanding, instead of denunciation.

An odd aspect of all this self-righteous bawling was that, as Dr. Odum sees it, there could be no real equilibrium of white and Negro in America short of a redistribution of the Negro throughout the nation, and a reintegration, which he mentions, moderately enough, as an unrealistic prospect. "The South could not and would not give the Negro equal opportunity. The North could not and would not, after all its years of trial and exhortation, do what it insisted the South must do."

It is difficult for the outsider to see the problems in the South, or seeing them to understand them, when they are stated in principles. Dr. Odum devotes a succession of chapters to a vivid portrayal of the principles in practice, by recounting the experiences of a benign man in the mid-channel South, named John, who prayed on Sundays and did good every day to white and black alike; also of a prosperous neighboring aristocrat named Thomas; also of some decayed gentry; also of some poor whites; also of some Negroes; also of some more remote figures better known to history.

In this personalized portrayal of the developing South the points which the author makes are remarkably persuasive. One has a better understanding of the furies and the antics and the reasons for the South's following too often such monstrous mountebanks as have cavorted there, when it would have followed good leaders just as loyally. The South does not quickly outgrow the habits deep-rooted in the insufficient public education of a few decades ago, and in the inertia and poverty and intellectual stagnation which are the fruits of it. But it begins to outgrow these miseries. One state in 1930 spent more money on Negro education than it had on all education in 1900, the author notes. The South's leading colleges, rather surprisingly, enroll more students from outside their region than do the schools of any other section, excluding only four primarily national universities of the Northeast.

The hope which Dr. Odum sees is

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in broad as well as local planning, and one of the large functions of the Southern Regional Council is to promote this scientific planning for living and working and learning and fostering and enjoying. The tasks are immense. The need is great—not alone for the South but for the nation for which, one must remember, the South is an immense seedbed of population. This is indeed more than a regional problem, and it is one which will be better solved by patience and understanding and industry than by a deficiency of knowledge and a surplus of fury.

The survey by Dr. Johnson, who is the president of Fisk University, and his associates (Elizabeth L. Allen, Horace M. Bond, Margaret McCulloch, and Alma Forrest Polk) is based upon contributions by some 700 individuals in the South and upon field trips by the staff members. Its conclusions support any number of Dr. Odum's views. The fact that it concentrates on "best practices" in race relations, as previously mentioned, does not mean that it is a complacent expression of satisfaction with a most dubiously best-of-all-possible-worlds. The less admirable practices are known and admitted, but Dr. Johnson and his colleagues have discerned things which have eluded the eyesight and the conscience of a great many writers on the South's failings. If with respect to race relations "the civilization of the South is still somewhat ahead of its progress" (to invert Margot Asquith's sharp witticism on America) Dr. Johnson, like Dr. Odum, at least finds that improvement is under way to an encouraging degree. The principle of equalization is advancing and extending, and its practice makes perceptible if slow headway. Southern Negro leaders' aims are higher than their hopes for the immediate future, but they are proven willing to work for improvement within the limits imposed on them.

Both of the races are aware of the deep roots of the South's troubles, and that so many interracial groups are striving to cure the races' common woes is itself evidence of gain, and of the Negroes' increasing prospect of moving "into the main stream" of American life.

Mark S. Watson was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for international correspondence in 1945. Most of his journalistic career has been with the Baltimore Sun, *which he joined in 1920. He has been, progressively, assistant managing editor, Sunday editor, and, during the war, military editor. He is now with the paper's Washington bureau.*

"... Liberty and Justice for All"

JIM CROW AMERICA. By Earl Conrad. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1947. 237 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ERNEST BAER JOHNSON

IT is heartening to note that World War II, with its attendant demands and philosophy of global democracy, has at least brought forth a number of courageous writers who are passionately devoted to fighting for democratic principles. Earl Conrad with "Jim Crow America" takes his place alongside Bartley Crum and England's Nevil Shute whose respective books "Behind the Silken Curtain" and "The Chequer Board" are among the more significant documents to emerge within recent weeks. Mr. Conrad is well qualified for the task to which he has set himself. In addition

to being a labor organizer, he is a first-rate newspaperman, and a student of American history whose diligence and integrity in that field will eventually be recognized even by the die-hard "authorities" who have yet to admit the truth about the Negro's fight for freedom and his contributions to American culture. It will be remembered that nine years ago, when Mr. Conrad had completed his biography of Harriet Tubman, a Negro woman abolitionist and Civil War heroine—"a magnificent figure ranking in stature with any other woman in American history"—some thirty editors refused to publish it because the subject was "freakish" and the theme "too esoteric" to present to the American public. The book was finally published by a Negro firm. Apparently things have changed a little, for the author experienced no such difficulty with his new book which deals specifically with the explosive problem of racial attitudes in this country.

"Jim Crow America" is just what the title says it is. It is a compilation of essays and anecdotes, drawn from Mr. Conrad's experiences, put together to show how chattel slavery in America has created in white people attitudes which distort their thinking and has made for a vicious system of suppression and exclusion. It points up the incredible inhumanity practiced by America on 15,000,000 of its Negro citizens.

In one chapter, "The Education of Whom?", the author touches on the misinformation about the Negro in history textbooks. For instance, he discusses the false concept handed down by reputable historians that the carpet-bagging politicians and Negro legislators in the Reconstruction governments immediately following the Civil War were incompetent, when the truth of the matter is that these governments gave the South its first free public school system and most of its existing progressive social legislation. Another chapter, "The Restrictive Covenant," sets forth the evils of legalized segregational policies which deny Negroes the right to live where they choose. New York City is cited. Here, in the most liberal city in the nation, Negroes, who compose six per cent of the city's population, are huddled together so densely in one area that a similar concentration for the entire population would result in all the people in America living in about one-half of New York City! Other chapters, notably, "Black and White Labor," "The Principle of Integration," and "Semantics, Romantics, and Legal Antics," will probably infuriate some readers of "Jim Crow America" almost to the point of nausea. The nature of Jim Crow and all its proponents provokes just that sort of reaction in those who take seriously the business of living within the framework of human brotherhood.

A way out of the dilemma? Mr. Conrad does not pretend to have an answer, but he believes that a change for the better is inevitable and that it might come through what he defines as a "New Reconstruction Government." And he warns that the world is taking cognizance of America's chicaneries and her failures in democracy which contrast so glaringly with her glowing protestations in behalf of the democratic way of life.

Just one point of dissension. I, for one, cannot go along with Mr. Conrad in his assumption that American jim crowism and America's hatred of the *non-white* exist solely because of the advent of slavery and subsequent historical developments in our national life. Together with these, we must face the additional fact that the American dilemma *does* reflect "a moral lag" in the progress of the nation, and until Americans begin to take stock and submit to purgation on this issue, progress in the direction of the democratic ideal is stifled.

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Straight Out of the Bottle

IF A MAN BE MAD. By Harold Maine. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 435 pp. $3.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

IT would seem that there had been enough books published about what alcoholism does to a man to frighten the addict away from public bars and private bottles. But the subject itself is fascinating even to a sober man, while its effect on the tens of thousands of men, or women too, who have come out at the other end of the dolorous road, or who are just plunging toward it, must be hallucinating indeed. William Seabrook's "Asylum" was the first non-fiction book to describe the alcoholic's cure in terms that the modern reader could interpret as common sense and uncommonly good writing. Recently, Charles Jackson's "The Lost Weekend" and the movie that followed it took the subject out of the realm of specialized study and brought it to the attention of millions as the dramatic struggle of man with his evil demon. Since then, readers have taken dizzy alcoholic fictional tours through Europe, America, and Mexico.

With the publication of Harold Maine's "If a Man Be Mad," we have now another non-fiction book as sound as Seabrook's and one more deeply founded in the knowledge of the psychiatry that has become commonplace in the intervening years. "If a Man Be Mad" is as terrifying as "The Lost Weekend" and has the added authority of being a factual account of exactly what happened to a Western boy whose childhood left him with a feeling of insecurity, who went into the Army when he was only sixteen and who gave himself up, as Seabrook did, to a "mental hospital," in the hope of finding a cure.

Mr. Maine's inferno was on a "mid-Pacific" island, obviously Hawaiian, for most of the places and names in the book have been disguised, including his own name. It is a day-by-day and year-by-year account of drunken debauches, ill-advised marriages, thwarted literary talent, alcoholic wards, grim rooms where patients were strapped flat on their backs to be beaten and outraged and sometimes killed by neglect and violence, and the usual round of tender-hearted women who were willing to endure whisky-sodden hulks in the hope that a senseless maternal devotion would bring them to their senses.

Though Mr. Maine has the novelist's gift of being able to create memorable characters, the reader never feels that he is writing fiction. His haunted and tortured men and women, his sadistic ward attendants and sometimes criminally stupid doctors and alienists are so far out of the ordinary world that it is hard to grasp their reality. After a chapter or two in which the author seems to be stumbling into the direct and forceful style he finally adopts, the book emerges as the most forceful of its kind to appear in over a decade. Whether or not his analysis of the reasons for his downfall and continued humiliation is accurate will have to be left to the reader to judge. He was an unbalanced youth whom years of suffering turned into a man strong enough to cure himself. If he had not taken to alcohol, his weaknesses might have driven him to evils and excesses of another nature, or into the nothingness of feeble and inert human creatures. His cure, oddly enough, resulted from his months as a ward attendant in various institutions for the insane. What he endured and what he saw drove the truth home to him at last. When he had witnessed his own past degradation in the brutalized bodies of men who were like himself he awoke from his long and deadly coma.

1946 Anisfield-Wolf Award

"EAST RIVER," Sholem Asch's novel of the tensions between Jew and non-Jew and among the orthodox and modern of each group, and "Latin Americans in Texas," by Pauline R. Kibbe, a study of the conflict between the Anglo-Americans and the Ibero-Americans of the Southwest, have just been announced as the winners of *The Saturday Review of Literature's* Anisfield-Wolf Award for 1946. The award was established by Edith Anisfield Wolf in memory of her father, John Anisfield, and her late husband, Eugene E. Wolf, providing $1,000 for each of the authors of the books adjudged best in the field of racial relations, either in creative literature or in the social sciences.

"East River" was published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, and "Latin Americans in Texas" is a publication of the University of New Mexico Press.

The Award Committee, made up of Henry Seidel Canby, chairman of the Editorial Board of *The Saturday Review of Literature;* Henry P. Fairchild, of New York University, and Ralph Linton, of Yale University, made the following statement:

"It required no extended discussion for the judges to come to complete agreement that 'East River' is outstanding in the literary field. Not only is it a superlative piece of fictional writing, but it is also an exceptionally sensitive, sympathetic, and understanding study of the cross currents of tradition, feeling, and group loyalty that flow through the composite American body politic. Here one sees in operation not only the tensions between Jew and non-Jew, Catholic and Protestant, employer and worker, but also the terrific strains among the orthodox and modern, the strict and the lax, the liberals and conservatives in each of these conventionally identified groups. And through all, and eventually rising triumphant over all, play the basic human emotions that are common to all mankind.

"'Latin Americans in Texas,' by Pauline R. Kibbe, is a study of the problems of group conflict between the Anglo-Americans and the Ibero-Americans of the Southwest. The author has dealt with the historical as well as the current and economic causes of friction. She not only analyzes the problem of racial discrimination but offers remedies based upon practical research and intensive knowledge of the Mexican people. Although the book deals specifically with one state, its program of good will and practical understanding is applicable to the minority problems which must be met in every state in the Union."

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Jeremiads in Low Key

OUR FAIR CITY. Edited by Robert S. Allen. New York: Vanguard Press. 1947. 387 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by DUNCAN AIKMAN

COLONEL ALLEN, former collaborator with Drew Pearson in his Washington Merry-Go-Round column, and co-author of a still-celebrated book of the early 1930's of the same name, introduces this one with a rumble and bumble of castigating adjectives and epithets. Municipal government in the U. S. A. is "a reeking shambles of corruption, incompetence, waste, and misrule." Its condition is "low and sordid." There has been no improvement in fifty years in the "bedraggled and malodorous story" of "boodling bosses . . . horrendous slums, dirt and filth, disease and vice . . . crass disregard of public health and human dignity," . . . with business flourishing as "the primary stultifying, corrupting, and anti-democratic influence."

Midway in the terrible temper storm, the reader gets braced—since this is a symposium of newspapermen's critiques on their "fair cities"—for a performance by a stable of surlier Steffenses. Then out from under the clouds comes a procession of seventeen articles, several of them so low in mouse-power that they do not trouble to pursue the angry editor's thesis at all. None of the pieces is really tops. Warren H. Pierce on "Chicago: Unfinished Anomaly," W. G. Clugston on "Kansas City: Gateway to What?" Irving Beinman's Birmingham, and Louis M. Lyons's Boston perhaps come nearest to it.

Mr. Pierce gives you a physical and geographical feel for Chicago as upwards of 200 square miles of "political Balkans concentrated in a . . . metropolitan area." His story of overlapping authorities, city, county, school, park, and sanitary district, and of the gang warfare of the Capone-Big Bill Thompson days merging into the milder regime of honest "protection" graft under Mayor Edward J. Kelly's regime, comes through as reasonably clear narrative. One gets a fairly orderly sense of what interferes with Chicago's ticking, and at the same time enables it to tick demonstrably better than at the time of the St. Valentine's Day massacre.

Mr. Beinman's Birmingham fits more neatly into the Allen imprecations pattern: a coke-smudged city owned by absentee big industry, indifferent to its progress, living standards, economic, and social needs; fondling its 384 churches in an effort to content its population with social betrayal and neglect; starved even by its home-grown nabobs, seeking relief from urban responsibilities and taxes in its ring of swanky suburbs.

Kansas City, through Mr. Clugston's eyes, has escaped from Pendergast machine-rule into boss control by a "crushing and reprehensible business hegemony" conducted by the *Kansas City Star* and allied local and national business interests. "Every form of liberal thought and action," writes Mr. Clugston with a touch of Colonel Allen's sententiousness, is stifled under the new dispensation. In the regional controversy now raging over the Missouri Valley Authority project, "newspapers, public officials, and local businessmen throughout Kansas and Western Missouri have, with rare exceptions, been browbeaten, hoodwinked and worse into echoing the *Star's* jeremiad in defense of the power trusts."

Mr. Lyons presents a coherent picture of a Boston whose "best people" have abandoned it by a flight into suburbanism, leaving it to the mercy of the rapacious mobs of Curley voters and spoilsmen.

The other cities do not come through so clearly, although Mr. Richard L. Neuberger writes the book's most charming prose about Seattle, its Alaska domain, and its left-right internal political struggles. Mr. Charles Raudebaugh debunks Mayor Roger D. Lapham's "clean business" administration of San Francisco by citing against him a covey of obnoxious political appointments; but he gets lost in inventories of their political connections. Mr. Leo Donovan's Detroit, otherwise a lively description of the disturbing effects of industrial mushrooming upon municipal politics, also suffers from these confusions. So do Dr. Gerald M. Capers's account of Crump boss-rule in Memphis (it isn't even explained what Boss Crump's celebrated local "ja" elections are like), Mr. Carlos F. Hurd's St. Louis, Mr. Roscoe Fleming's Denver, and Mr. Joseph Kinsey Howard's Butte. The details in Mr. Richard L. Maher's Cleveland could hardly be expected to register except with constant readers of local city-hall reportage. Paul Crowell's and A. H. Raskin's New York commentary turns out to be hardly more than a polite exposition of the good intentions of Mayor O'Dwyer. Mr. Thomas P. O'Neill's Philadelphia begins with familiar gags about corrupt politics and water supply, and moves into a collection of time-worn anecdotes about Philadelphia's old-time "society." Butte and Denver obviously have been plenty bad, but their analysts leave us with presentiments that they are reforming.

And one doesn't need to buy a book to be told by Mr. Henning Heldt that "it is the climate and the tourist economy that make Miami a city of sports-loving, outdoorsy, fun-pursuing people." Or by Robert E. G. Harris and Mr. Maury Maverick that it remains to be seen whether Los Angeles's current "blueprints and projects galore . . . will answer the city's basic needs."

"I've been so alone, and by myself, too."

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American Forces in Action

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

ACCORDING to the reader's prejudice or point of view, this review is a bit of special pleading, a piece of propaganda for the War Department, an article by a rank amateur on a subject he knows nothing about, or (I hope) an attempt to right a wrong of omission by the general public, which is ignoring some of the finest historical scholarship ever directed at the man on the street. I refer to the "American Forces in Action Series,"* issued at irregular intervals by the Government Printing Office and sold by the Superintendent of Documents at scandalously low prices. "The Capture of Makin," which lies open before me as I write, costs thirty-five cents. It has ten excellent maps, three charts, and thirty-nine photographs, not counting one on the cover. It is stoutly bound, printed in large type, and lies easy in the hand. It is written in English so clear I have never had to read a single sentence twice. It is one in a series of twelve such books (and more are to appear), in which the Historical Division of the War Department, a section largely created and officered by members of the American Historical Association, does its level best to tell soldiers and civilians precisely what occurred in the actions described. Only one of the series—that entitled "Omaha Beachhead"—has had general public attention. Yet here are narratives of ten representative engagements fought by a drafted army set forth as clearly, impartially, and impersonally as historical science can set down historical fact. As a literary historian I admire the structure and the style of these ten pamphlets. As a citizen concerned that war shall cease, I am grateful to the War Department for telling me what an "action" is like.

Except for the Canadian Army, which has a series like ours, this is the only thing of the kind in the world today, albeit I am told the British plan to emulate us. I do not know whose the idea was originally, but so far as I know, the series is the result of at least three component forces. The first was an Army War College project for an official history of World War I, not yet complete. This suggested the Historical Division. A second was the success of the Navy in issuing pamphlets about its battle actions—and my enthusiasm for the present series is in no way a reflection upon the admirable work of the marine historians. The third was the good sense, insight, and professional enthusiasm of men representing two sides to the problem—General McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War; and a committee of American historians headed by James Phinney Baxter, president of Williams College. The project was born back in 1943.

The main purpose of the Historical Division was and is, so far as I know, to create a many-volumed, definitive history of World War II. This is necessary; but in a democratic state, the citizens of which are entitled to know what its army does, a definitive history has two major defects: it is a long time a-borning, and it is hard going for non-technical readers. Yet World War II was a total war; that is, it was everybody's war. In July 1943 the Historical Division therefore made a momentous decision—it decided to write history early, and for everybody. Consonant with sound standards, it resolved to issue from time to time pamphlets on one or another phase of army warfare for the non-technical public.

Until the twentieth century the American Civil War was the greatest conflict of modern times. Millions of words were written about it. Yet, despite the official "Records of the Rebellion" in scores of volumes printed by the Government, it is almost impossible to follow the fortunes of any smaller unit on either side or to know what the experience of a squad, a company, or a battalion truly was. Even Freeman's "Lee," exhaustive as military history, moves on the general staff level.

World War II, in a degree beyond World War I, threw special responsibilities upon individual soldiers, smaller units, lesser commissioned officers. This was because, as a result of air warfare and other causes, combat is a problem of diffusion and decentralization in the sense that, however overwhelming staff work might be for the invasion of Europe, once action is begun, the lonely soldier in the foxhole, the small combat team, the two, three, or four men operating a special weapon, the crew of tank or airplane, the irregular guerrilla-like "front-line"—all these become autonomous units in a fashion unknown to the foot soldier of Frederick the Second. What is needed is a close-to-the-ground history. The case history of actions small enough to be comprised in one of this series offers the answer to the problem.

A SECOND important fact flowed from this decision to concentrate upon case history. You cannot interview all the members of the Fifth Army, and it would do you no good if you did. But you can (and in fact teams of the History section did) interview all the members of a squad, a company, or a battalion; you can check what they have to say against statements by their comrades and you can, by the use of photograph and map before such a unit, codify impressions, and

—Exhibition of Significant War Scenes by Battlefront Artists.

"Oil Pipelines through Tuscany," by Edward Laning.

* (1) *To Bizerte with the II Corps;* (2) *Papuan Campaign: The Buna-Sanananda Operation;* (3) *Salerno: American Operations from the Beaches to the Volturno;* (4) *Volturno: From the Volturno to the Winter Line;* (5) *Merrill's Marauders;* (6) *Fifth Army at the Winter Line;* (7) *Omaha Beachhead;* (8) *The Admiralties: Operations of the 1st Cavalry Division;* (9) *Guam: Operations of the 77th Division;* (10) *The Capture of Makin* (11) *Small Unit Actions;* (12) *St.-Lo: (7 July-19 July 1944);* 1946. *Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office.*

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reconcile inconsistencies. In preparing manuscript for this series some units were thus interviewed not once but two or three times, each interview adding to the historical reconstruction of the action, and each being checked against orders given and received, the records of associated units, maps, pictures, and captured enemy documents. It is, I think, safe to say that the booklets in the "American Forces in Action Series" are therefore the most exact histories of battle action ever written. And they represent an enormous condensation of material. The pamphlet entitled "Guam" runs to only 135 pages, of which a large portion is given over to maps and pictures. But every sentence is the final distillation of a long investigation.

A third fact about this series may seem to tell against it in popular estimation. The writers deliberately avoid color, drama, emotion, personality. No pamphlet is signed. No style is distinguishable from any other style. There is nothing melodramatic (in the false sense) in these laconic pages, and the absence of this sort of thing is a tribute to the good sense of the American soldier. If the GI was under the impression that the historical interviewer was a correspondent looking for a "story," he wouldn't talk, or at least wouldn't talk sense. But when he learned that he and his fellows were asked merely for honest reports, that they could check their stuff against each other and against records, and that the interview was for serious historical purposes his attitude changed and he gave freely. Historians working in the field (incidentally, some of them were killed and wounded) had the disturbing experience of learning what the raw stuff of history truly is. It was an education for everybody.

Suspicion naturally arises that the series is colored for its own purposes by the War Department, since no pamphlet can be printed until it is checked for security purposes. I am assured on good authority that no statement of fact made in any pamphlet has ever been altered in any way by any official of the War Department. The Army is not trying to save face. I learn also that, within the limits of human frailty, including that of officialdom, all records and all personnel are freely open to the Historical Division.

Behind the creation of this series lie stories as absorbing as any in their terse pages. One of them ("Merrill's Marauders") was written in the main without records, all the records having been destroyed or lost, and is composed out of personal interviews and, miraculously, a medical notebook. The pamphlet on Guam reduces about 100,000 words of note-taking to manageable size. A pamphlet on four "small-unit" action retails a single battle day spent by some 200 Rangers, a single tank action, the work of a single battalion on Saipan, and the fire baptism of a single green regiment in Italy.

Perhaps the most sensible thing to do is to quote General Eisenhower's "Foreword" in some of these pamphlets:

> To the American public, this record of high achievement by men who served their nation well is presented as a preface to the full military history of World War II. To the soldiers who took part in the operations concerned, these narratives will give the opportunity to see more clearly the results of orders which they obeyed and of sacrifices which they and their comrades made, in performance of missions that find their meaning in the outcome of a larger plan of battle.

The fact that the prose of this series is impersonal and compact does not mean it is uninteresting or the drama of battle lacking. The stark objectivity of the method, the unadorned sentences, the telling accumulation of fact are as dramatic as any amount of newspaper rhetoric.

Here is a record of a few of the Army's actions set down for the general public by trained historical scholars.

Howard Mumford Jones, author, poet, and playwright, has been Professor of English at Harvard since 1936. His latest books are "Education and World Tragedy" (1946) and "Ideas in America" 1944. He was educational consultant to the Provost-Marshal General's Office in 1945.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

"FULL MANY A FLOWER"

Mrs. Beatrice S. Firestone, of Cincinnati, submits twenty quotations by twenty well-known poets from which the names of twenty kinds of flowers have been omitted. Can you fill in the blanks? Allowing five points if you can identify either the flower in or the author of each quotation, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 28.

1. In Flanders fields the ..... blow
   Between the crosses, row on row.
2. I never saw a moor,
   I never saw the sea;
   Yet now I know how the ..... looks.
3. Pale hands, pink tipped, like ..... buds that float
   On those cool waters where we used to dwell.
4. That every ..... the Garden wears
   Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.
5. She had three ..... in her hand.
6. When ..... last in the dooryard bloom'd,
   And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the night.
7. The bride hath paced into the hall,
   Red as a ..... is she.
8. Open afresh your round of starry folds,
   Ye ardent .....
9. Hope is like a ..... trembling from its birth.
10. By those happy souls who dwell
    In yellow mead of .....
11. All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
    The ....., the little children's flower.
12. And my lonely spirit thrills
    To see the frosty ..... like a smoke upon the hills.
13. When all at once I saw a crowd,
    A host, of golden .....
14. There's ....., that's for remembrance.
15. Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
    Sweet as the ..... peeps beneath the thorn.
16. I found the fresh ..... in the woods,
    Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook.
17. As the ..... turns on her god, when he sets,
    The same look which she turn'd when he rose.
18. And where my brother set
    The ..... on his birthday.
19. The slender ..... would not shake
    One long milk bloom on the tree.
20. And the white ..... blossoms star the twilight of the pines.

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White Men and Red

BLOOD BROTHER. By Elliott Arnold. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1947. 558 pp. $3.

Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL

ELLIOTT ARNOLD has published five novels and three books of non-fiction, all of which were well received and two of which were best sellers. Now he offers us an historical novel packed with action and long enough to introduce a large number of characters, both Indian and white. His story is laid in Arizona, in the country of the Chiricahua Apaches, and deals with the period from 1856 to 1872, when all that country was cursed by Indian wars.

The story is primarily an account of how two courageous and intelligent leaders, one a white pioneer, Tom Jeffords, the other Cochise, an Apache war chief, managed to bring peace after the United States Government had failed to achieve it. Apparently the author hopes the reader will discover a parallel with conditions in our own time.

Mr. Arnold has chosen a lofty theme, that all men are blood brothers. He has done a lot of hard and intelligent research. His materials are well organized and he writes with a quiet earnestness that carries the reader through more than 500 pages to the end of the book.

But often one wishes for a little more color, a little more showing instead of mere telling of the tale. There are comparatively few pictures and far too many pages of naked dialogue, so that the reader gets the effect of sitting in a motion picture show with the screen dark and the sound track going endlessly on. Dialogue is too emphatic a device to be used so constantly. We hear too much and see and smell too little.

For, in fact, as everyone knows, what people say is far less significant as an indication of their thoughts and feelings than their bodily attitudes and facial expressions. This is particularly true of Indians who, though they can on occasion be poker-faced, are wonderful mimics and quite demonstrative among themselves.

Moreover, any author who writes about Indians must realize that most of his readers are quite unable to visualize the people and scenes of old-time Indian life. If the author will not take the trouble to make us see his characters and their background, he should certainly have his book lavishly illustrated with old photographs or accurate drawings.

Mr. Arnold has taken great pains to familiarize himself with the period in which his story is laid. Not only are his main characters historical, but many of their actions and words are so, too. Almost all the male characters in the book were once living persons, and the author assures us that he has stuck closely to their known attitudes and actions. Only the feminine characters are invented, yet the love interest is by no means negligible. Moreover, the detail of Indian and Army life has been closely studied, for the author has worked with experts in his field. Yet, strangely, he seems not to have consulted the Apaches. At any rate, his preface expresses no obligation to any Indian informant.

Anyone interested in our Indian wars will enjoy this book, and will probably return to it for certain passages, like that recounting the Camp Grant Massacre. When will publishers realize that long historical novels should have an index?

—Ernest A. Bachrach.

Eliott Arnold's characters "managed to bring peace after the United States Government had failed to achieve it."

Skyscraper Neurosis

CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD. By Erico Verissimo. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 371 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

ON Erico Verissimo — probably the most popular Brazilian novelist, and without any doubt a major writer — skyscrapers seem to exert a peculiar fascination. In his brilliant, though sprawling, novel, "The Rest is Silence," a girl's fall, or leap, from the thirteenth floor of a skyscraper set the whole plural action in motion. In his present story, some height has been added to what Senhor Verissimo seems to visualize as the symbol of a thoroughly sick society driven by ambition and vanity to erect lofty buildings which yet only tower over the misery and squalor of the ordinary man.

Dr. Eugenio Fontes, the protagonist of this novel, is at first not really concerned with the monumental skyscraper and its moneyminded builder (with whose wife he has a fleeting affair); he becomes so only when the architect's obsession, together with his egotism and his social prejudices, kills his own daughter. Only a short year earlier, however, the death of that girl in an abortion would not have disturbed Eugenio more than many another pathetic case coming the way of a consulting physician. As it is, little Dora's tragedy assumes the proportions of a test case for the sincerity of his determination to better the world.

In short, Senhor Verissimo's hero is another doctor in the long and often distinguished line of medical men in fiction who have arrived at being alert to their social responsibilities. As most of these characters, Eugenio has not at once seen the light. Born as a poor man's son, he has allowed himself to be married by a snobbish heiress at the very moment his love for a fellow student who on her part loves him dearly matured. Her death three years later and the discovery of the child born to and concealed from him by this brave girl prompts him to leave his comfortable position as the husband of a rich woman, and return to the life of an ordinary general practitioner "at five milreis per visit."

That change of heart in Eugenio is very well presented by the author—although not well enough. I'm sorry to say, to soften the sentimentality of the whole story. It gets downright trite occasionally, especially in the philosophical talks between the doctor and an aged colleague, or in his long mental conversations with the woman whose passing has sent him onto his road to Damascus. Yet even in those didactic tirades and near-banalities there is an intensity of feeling and compassion which cannot fail to engross the reader.

Those who are familiar with Senhor Verissimo's previous work needn't be told of the wealth of his inventive imagination, the excellence of his deft characterizations, and the impressive quality of his milieu descriptions. It also seems he has found an admirable translator.

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THEMES FOR A NEW DAY

AFTER two years of peace the themes that will produce American literature over the next decade and a hint of the manner in which they will be created are beginning to appear. The Second World War was a period of literary confusion. Many of the novelists whom we had come to regard as our leading writers were silent, either from the shock that war brings to sensitive men and women, or from the sense of the futility of returning to old problems and familiar scenes. Others, like Hemingway and Steinbeck, became war correspondents for a time; still others were frank propagandists who went to England, China, or India for the good of the cause. It was the heyday of the trained newspaper and magazine writers, the writers of the absorbing factual war books that told the story of Hitler's advance over Europe, the great sea-battles in the Pacific, and the final conquest of Europe. It was also the time of the speculative writers, most of whose guesses have turned out to be wrong, and of those who predicted among other things that when the veterans by their millions came back home, they would find their country so unsatisfactory that they would have to resort to force to take it over.

Today the war correspondent has almost disappeared. In his place we have the returned soldier who is reciting his past adventures, or recreating in fact or fiction the inspiration he has acquired from all over the world. There are also the histories of American action during the war, the accounts of the Seabees or the Marines, of naval task forces and of individual ships, the records from official sources of the services of this or that army or division in Asia or Europe; there are the biographies of generals and admirals. All of these books are invaluable as source material; they are the very pulse of history, from which the war strategists and students of the future will put together the story of our part in one of the wars which have saved civilization from disaster. Few of them belong to literature, except as an inexhaustible mine from which it can be transmuted, as silk or colors by magic chemical processes emerge from coal or oil.

In the recent books there have been little of the destruction and negation that were the mark of the First World War and the depression. Only a few of the war novels that have so far come from veterans have been as completely pacifist as was Dos Passos's "Three Soldiers" and the war fiction that followed it twenty years ago. Nor has there been another "Main Street" or "Babbitt." Nor has any savagely satirical or vindictive writer yet appeared.

There is today a more honest, certainly a less despairing, study of the forces that have been at work in America during the war years. It is as if writers had learned the facts of life from the books that had preceded theirs and had realized the senselessness of trying to prove again how abysmal is life on American farms, villages, and cities. For a long time no one will need to attempt that close examination of Southern decadence to which William Faulkner devoted himself, nor could another "Tobacco Road" find so great an audience.

The function of the writer of today, as of yesterday, continues to be the constant reexamination of American life. There is anger enough in the books about racial discrimination, but it is a positive and not a negative emotion, since they do not leave the reader with a sense of hopelessness, as if the writer felt that nothing could, or ever would, be done about it. The novels and the factual books of today have a new note. There are a thousand errors in the way we live and think and behave; they must be clearly revealed so that they can be obliterated. The major theme for the coming years will be inequality in American life. The downtrodden Negro and the slighted Jew now have a thousand champions and to some of them the public has avidly listened. Even the motion pictures have had a change of heart, for though no producer has yet had the courage to deal honestly with the Negro question, discrimination against the Jews is to become a popular theme.

There can be no doubt that widespread knowledge of at least the elements of psychiatry and psychoanalysis has led to a new type of fiction. It is questionable whether Flaubert could have profited if any of the books of Freud had been available when he wrote "Madame Bovary," but to writers of less genius and less gifted in reading the human heart, Freud and Jung and their disciples have been a Godsend. More novels can now be written from within, as they should be, for characters are more likely to have the breath of life in them if their creators know what hidden forces move them to ambition, love, and hate. As time goes on, the mechanics of the psychiatrist's textbooks will become less obvious and the results in realism more certain. These intense examinations into the minds of men and women will have the utmost importance, for the entire sexual life of America needs airing.

The problem of the woman in American society, a never-ending subject for fiction writers, can soon be studied with more scientific evidence to back up personal opinion and plots. Those old favorites, the career and/or marriage, sexual experience before marriage and infidelity after it, can be brought closer to actuality and gain new life. The problem of woman's security in an uncertain world has gained a new impetus from the war, and all the related problems — whether women should take a greater share in politics, in community life, and the making of laws; whether they should seize, or be given, more direct control of the wealth they inherit, whether they really want equality with men or are better content with laws and customs that make men in reality their guardians. These are old themes, but they will now have a new meaning.

It is certain that the thousands of young men who have from their experience in the armies abroad had to deal with conquered and subject peoples will bring a new element into American writing. We have always had a few fragments of imperial garments about us, but now we are becoming a full-fledged imperialist power. More thousands of trained executives, administrators, technicians, and experts of all sorts will cross the seas to Japan and Korea, will hold positions of power and responsibility in Germany, Greece, and Turkey, and wherever else fate in the future will send them. Whether an American Kipling will arise to proclaim the might and majesty of an American foreign service in the next ten years, no one can say. But there can be no doubt that so venturesome a life all over the world will bring forth writers as a seed grows from fertile soil. There is a whole new world to explore, at home and abroad, and new men and women in it. H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On Grace Moore

SIR: David Hudson's communication in the Phoenix Nest [*SRL* Mar. 1] concerning Grace Moore quickened my irritation at the blind adulation accorded this singer for so many years. Miss Moore, of course, had a devoted personal following, and her sudden death is greatly to be regretted. But to lavish on her such superlatives as "the finest lyric soprano of the past ten years," "without a peer in the ranks of our Metropolitan," and "an unqualifiedly great singer" and to rank her with a really great artist like Ezio Pinza are absolutely ridiculous. And I hope that taking exception to Mr. Hudson's verdict will not be construed as a slander on the memory of a beloved personality.

The vagaries of Metropolitan casting certainly give pause to anyone who follows the schedule of the opera house, but Miss Moore's relatively infrequent appearances there may be accounted for partly by the large number of commitments she had elsewhere.

With Mr. Hudson's other comments on her career I find myself quite unable to agree. Undeniably, one of her most salient qualities was a twofold determination, to be successful and to improve her own art. Her success is a matter of common knowledge, but less well known is her sincere and constant attempt to raise her own artistic standards. The trouble was that her dramatic talent consisted chiefly of an almost wholly artificial approach plus a strong tendency towards exhibitionism. She was lacking in musicianship and had almost no feeling for the style of any composer above the musical comedy level. These two well-nigh indispensable aspects of the art of an opera and/or concert singer could be overlooked in the case of someone who is extraordinarily gifted in vocal ability. But to the end of her career Miss Moore frequently hooted, sang off pitch (usually flat), and failed to do what is expected of any musical beginner, namely, *keep in time*. The miracle to me is that she was able to do as well as she did. The perseverance which she showed, together with real vocal ability and musicianship, would provide the perfect formula for artistic achievement.

COURTNEY B. LAWSON.

Chautauqua, N. Y.

Natural Man *vs.* Spiritual Man

SIR: Your thought-provoking review on Mr. Steinbeck's book "The Wayward Bus" [*SRL* Feb. 15] provides a number of opportunities for speculation — principally on the responsibility of the creative artist to his audience.

After a number of years of silence, all Mr. Steinbeck gives us is, as one reviewer put it, "a disappointing piece of second-rate, back-to-the-bulls fiction." He has dissolved into a soft nostalgia for the good old days when men were men, just as surely as any decaying gentlewoman who longs in the midst of genteel poverty for the lost grandeur of her girlhood, unable to make the necessary transition from Then to Now.

We can only conclude that the onset of the Atomic Age has caught Mr. Steinbeck, along with many others, napping, or he would have seen the Natural Man in his proper proportions—useful enough for his time, when brawn was needed to fell the forests and to plant his seed, and for survival, to kill an adversary by a single blow.

Now there is a New Age. And the Natural Man, if we are to survive, *must* be followed by his successor, the Spiritual Man—a lot tougher customer, if Messrs. Steinbeck, Hemingway, Farrell, and Caldwell but realized it, and certainly a more reliable one. His inner strength is tried again and again by fiercer battles than brawn can ever know. He will not "at any moment leave a woman, or an enterprise in which after toil and frugality he has succeeded, to walk away with only the clothes on his back, to begin anywhere else."

It is possible that Mr. Steinbeck has done more than he meant to do. He has shown us the gap. But he has offered us a leader whose usefulness is limited to the physical, asks us to mourn the fact that his kind is vanishing from civilization, and tells us that without this life force we are perishing.

Not of this lack shall we perish. We should rather die if we rely on the Juans to conduct us on our long journey toward San Juan de la Cruz. In spite of Mr. Steinbeck, it isn't the Natural Man who can perform this feat, but the one who comes after him. There are not only few of them left, there are not many born!

I am indebted to you and your magazine for the many recent stimulating articles, such as "Wanted: New Gods" by Ben Lucien Burman, and "The Age of the Jackpot" by Edwin Seaver. You are doing a great service by publishing them.

FRANCES SEGRAVES.

Boothbay Harbor, Me.

"You're very lucky. There's a portable one coming in right now."

Mr. Sinclair's Fallacy

SIR: I presume a good many of your readers have pointed out the obvious fallacy in Upton Sinclair's review of "I Wish I'd Written That" [*SRL* Jan. 11]. The thirty-two editors were asked to select short pieces or excerpts suitable for reprinting in an anthology which they wished they had written themselves, not those which they most admired. Most authors, I submit, can not easily imagine themselves having written anything except work produced in their own generation, by men of approximately the same outlook and experience of life. The fact that they chose contemporary work reflects the conditions of the anthology, not the limitation of their taste or knowledge. I don't believe it is making the argument too exclusively *ad hominem* to say that Upton Sinclair is the only editor of the thirty-two capable of thinking of himself in the same category as the Prophet Isaiah.

An educated man's knowledge of the classics comes to him in youth; by the time he reaches his own productive period they are a part of the established order of his universe. He would no more think of wishing he had written "Hamlet" than Joyce Kilmer would have wished that he, instead of God, had made a tree.

ANNA MARY WELLS.

West Allenhurst, N. J.

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Back to an Orderly World

TROLLOPE: A COMMENTARY. By Michael Sadleir. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. Index + 435 pp. $4.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

FEW literary historians have done more for the Trollope revival than has Mr. Michael Sadleir, whose commentary, here reprinted with some pruning, came out originally in 1927. It is a good book, accurate, full, and pleasurably urbane. I think Mr. Sadleir is inclined to exaggerate the neglect into which Trollope had fallen. To say that twenty years ago "Trollope's novels had virtually faded from the consciousness of British fiction readers" is certainly an exaggeration. Before then there were popular reprints of a good many, even of "The Macdermots of Ballydoran," "Castle Richmond," "The Bertrams," and "Rachel Ray"; and I remember my own excitement and pleasure some thirty-five years ago or more in a reissue of "The Three Clerks," a book which Mr. Sadleir underrates. Nevertheless, it took the enthusiasm of such zealots as Mr. Sadleir, Father Ronald Knox, and A. Edward Newton to put Trollope fairly in the forefront of Victorian novelists, and to gain for him an audience which may not be very large in numbers, but is militant and keen. Nor is it derogatory to the charm and ingenuity of Angela Thirkell to say that, without Trollope, her country and characters would not have had the contours and the idiosyncrasies which make her books so great a delight.

The present popularity of Trollope, especially in wartime ravaged, unstable, and changing England is not hard to explain. There is in all his books a great steadfastness, a sense of fundamental security, of comfortable ordinariness: against that it was possible to enjoy eccentricity, oddness, even disaster. To read the novels, as they were read, during the bombings, in shelters and cellars, in the front line, in submarines and ships of the line was, for a moment, to enjoy the felicity proclaimed by Lucretius to those who watched a hurricane from some point of safety. It was only a momentary, and a false consolation; it was, no doubt, your own world that was crashing and tumbling over your head, under your feet: but how pleasant to retreat for an hour or two into this other world of unquestioned order and stability!

The reasons for earlier decline in Trollope's popularity are more complex. Too much has been made, I think, of the effect of the "Autobiography" and Trollope's proud confession that he wrote his novels just as he wrote his reports for the post office—regularly and with no waiting on the Muse. That admission damaged his critical reputation, but would not have worried the average reader, even if he had ever heard of it.

There are other reasons. First, Trollope wrote too much—more than fifty novels and books of short stories, and a number of essays, travel sketches, and biographies. An author who has only a few books to his name is more likely to survive than an author who has fifty, of which more than a score are well worth reading. Then Trollope was unlucky in that there is no one, or two of his books standing eminently above all the rest—as, for instance, does Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford," or Wilkie Collins's "The Woman in White" and "The Moonstone," or Charles Reade's "The Cloister and the Hearth." Another reason for Trollope's lapse of popularity was that he represented, to the rising young rebels against that order, the smugness, the self-satisfaction of the Victorian age; represented all they deplored and despised far more than did Dickens or Thackeray.

The last reason is one we may call mechanical. The novels were out of print. Now it is not necessarily true that a book goes out of print because it is unpopular. That may be so; but it is equally true that a book may go unread simply because no publisher has the wit or the devotion to keep it in print. Trollope at the moment is in luck because a great university press has undertaken the business of reprinting his novels. But I am certain that if any commercial publisher spent on a collected edition of Trollope a tithe of the paper devoted to "Always a Jade" or to "Myself and the Id" he could sell the edition without any difficulty.

For the past four years R. Ellis Roberts has been working on his "History of My Life and Times," an experiment in autobiography. In England he was, successively, literary editor of The New Statesman *and* Time and Tide, *and editor of* Life and Letters. *Since arrival in America in 1939 he has written many poems and critical articles and lectured at various universities and clubs.*

All-Around Man

JED BLAINE'S WOMAN. By Evelyn Wells. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 410 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by CASSIE MEREDITH

THE problem of entertainment for the permanently adolescent has become easier as the "Westerns" roll off the Hollywood plains. Happy hours are filled with visions of pursued covered-wagons, gunfire, strong-armed supermen booted and spurred for the chase, and sparkling gambling dens where fortunes are won or lost at a throw. Or sometimes history may be conveniently used for dramatic purposes.

In "Jed Blaine's Woman" Miss Evelyn Wells contributes to this school in a rugged tale of California pioneering, ranging from rags-to-riches to rags again and then to final riches. The Gold Rush, depression, Comstock Lode silver market, and the ultimate construction of the cross-country railroad bringing San Francisco as near to civilization as New York, along with California's entrance to the Union as a free state, and a rather remote sense of the Civil War, are Miss Wells's main concern.

Jed Blaine, fiery, silver-tongued ex-Tammany figure, sails the *Flying Star* from New York harbor, bound for the rich Western lands. Keziah Denridge, daughter of the ship's owner, boards her in revolt against her father's impending marriage. Never was eighteen-year-old virtue so quickly defiled. Jed Blaine claims his woman; the conflict of wills exists, but man triumphs against the untamed, permanent gamine child-bride. Married at sea, Mr. and Mrs. Blaine greet the hazards of a new world. Jed's knowledge would burn up a Boy Scout. He can mine for gold, build a house, act as midwife, lead the state politically, head the Vigilantes, and kill a man with a mining hose. Also he is a financial wizard, railroad dreamer, fascinating lover, and vastly prolific.

The fires of San Francisco, the painful emergence of that city as a power, the hysterical richness of the golden days are once more vividly reconstructed. Dresses by Worth, jewelry by Tiffany, silks from China, and a perfect part for Clark Gable clearly point to immediate production.

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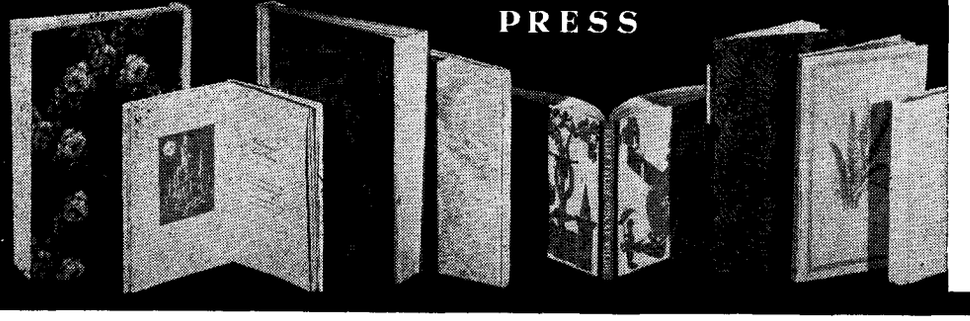

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Seeing Things

THE OVER-CANDID CAMERA

"FIRST FILMS!" the advertisement ran, "MUSSOLINI'S GIRL FRIEND, Scenes in the Private Life of Claretta Petacci! Surrounded by Treasures, She Lived in Regal Splendor."

That was the old, the naïve, the tired, but the still irresistible bait employed recently to lure many of us to the newsreels. Although a liaison is a liaison and love in high places is no doubt like love in low places, the earth's romantics refuse to believe this. Eros in ermine, a national leader masquerading as Cupid, a chance to look not at a king but at a king's mistress or a dictator's Aphrodite—these are enough to make the whole world spin.

Why? Why, indeed!

Since Adam, men have lost their heads over women, but the familiar story takes on a new fascination when the heads lost belong to heads of states. No one can deny this. At such moments gossip apparently loses its back-fence status and becomes the property of Clio.

By what alchemy do the secrets of the alcove gain a new fascination merely because the alcove in question happens to be a ruler's? Is it because people who cannot comprehend the conflict of ideas in politics rejoice in having something set before them which they do understand—that is, the tug of passions? Is desire the humanizing touch; in actual fact, the lowest common denominator? Are the mortal aspects of power attractive because they rob the powerful of their pretensions and make them slightly ridiculous?

Do palace romances win wide publics by feeding the frustrated on dreams, by permitting the anonymous to identify themselves with the celebrated? Or is it because names are news in and out of the history books, and we are amused to discover that those who have presumed to lead can also be led? If not, why do we so crave the most intimate details of the private life of public men? And delight in having world figures reduced to the scale of a traveling salesman's interest? What is the explanation of the enduring spell cast by some of history's more prominent mopsies? Is it because they were beauties who sinned greatly, or because they were women who chanced to tempt those who thought themselves great?

Did we go to this film brimming with those tabloid hopes with which all of us in our time have devoured court memoirs? Were we trusting to have Suetonius retold for us in love-nest terms? How much of what we pretended to be historical interest was sheer pruriency? Or did we assemble, bug-eyed, expecting to see a successor to Louise de la Vallière, to Pompadour, to Castlemaine, or Walewska?

If these were our expectations, we were due for a sad disappointment. We had failed to take the camera into account. What we saw was, first of all, the exterior of the villa Mussolini had built for "the Petacci woman," as Ciano refers to her in his "Diaries." It could have been any large modernistic house. It was comfortable, if not glamorous, and, above all, costly—as the sound track was quick to emphasize. So much for the advertisement's claim that "she lived in regal splendor."

Then, suddenly, we found ourselves inside this villa, looking at a short, jerky little film. It was the kind of film that any bourgeois wife who owned a movie camera might have taken, for reasons of vanity, of herself and of her home to send to her husband overseas. All of us, to our sorrow, have been exposed to yards of such family-album movies. We have endured them in the homes of friends, both well-meaning and well-endowed, who suffer from the delusion that pictures of themselves getting in and out of cars, having cocktails, dashing in for a swim, walking down garden paths, looking out of their bedroom windows, or smirking self-consciously at the camera at their front doors, are as absorbing to other people as they are to them.

—*François Boucher.*

Like Pompadour, "the luckier palace mistresses were those who were free to capture the world's fancy before Daguerre."

This Petacci film was neither lurid nor sexy. More accurately, it was embarrassing; embarrassing only in the sense that eavesdropping is embarrassing, or that it is embarrassing to read a personal letter which has been intercepted. It was private not because it was indiscreet but because its quality, as photography, was so amateurish that plainly it was never meant to be made public.

The feeling the film gave of having been intended for other eyes—and then seized—added, of course, to its validity and in a ghoulish way to its interest. Obviously, what we saw Clara (or Claretta) Petacci doing was, as they say of radio programs, "spontaneous and unrehearsed" even though she was not "unsponsored."

A YOUNG woman was shown flitting about her boudoir. She was wearing a negligee which, though fluffy and soft and fancy, seemed no more alarming or provocative to my hopeful eyes than what I believe is described as a hostess gown. This was the Petacci.

She was far from beautiful. Certainly, she was distinguished neither in her features nor her bearing. She looked as if history and she had never met and could never meet. She was any gross sugar-daddy's sugar, any rich spaghetti-king's sauce. This was about the extent of her allure.

There was not the slightest suggestion of regality or high intrigue about her. Instead, she was easy, stocky, plump. Indeed, her figure was surprisingly suggestive of a well-fed Shetland pony wearing its winter coat. No one watching her as she darted about her boudoir in her amply filled negligee would have guessed at the slim beauty of her legs as they were to be revealed to the world's view in a ghastly photograph of a ghastly event. I mean the photograph which capped this intimate film even as it capped Petacci's public career—the appalling picture of her and Mussolini when, after their execution, they were strung up by their feet and left dangling, surrounded by a vindictive mob in a public square in Milan.

In the movie we saw, the Petacci was no *maîtresse* according to the romantic tradition. She was merely, as the advertisement insisted, somebody's "girl friend." The somebody

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just happened to be Mussolini. What was perhaps most arresting about her was the unconscious way she reflected his plebeian taste and background. It was as a "girl friend" and no more that she appeared on the screen; a commonplace, mildly presentable woman who was happy in her love-nest, and childishly proud of the material things her lover had given her. She was disclosed looking at her trophies—at the jewels the Duce had presented her and a tableful of ugly silver knickknacks he had lavished upon her.

She and her legend were, in other words, as much the victim of the camera as her dead body was of the hoodlums in that Milan square. That the Petacci had the stuff of the romantic legend in her seems incontrovertible. Like Eva Braun, apparently another woman whose looks were far from dazzling and another victim of the camera, she had her moment of greatness. This was when she chose, of her own accord and to Mussolini's surprise, to share her lover's fate.

The world has always found it impossible not to respect those willing to embrace death for what they believe in or have lived by. The willingness to make the final sacrifice is a gesture which can obliterate a dreary list of misdeeds. In the realm of romance it is the supreme gesture. It fills even enemies with admiration, grants luster to what was sordid, and wins a respectful remembrance for those who otherwise would have merited oblivion.

BUT the candid camera and romance are bitter foes. The camera is merciless if for no other reason than that it is factual. As a recording instrument it has no imagination of its own. It shows us what was set before it—nothing more. In the case of this captured film this was Clara Petacci's misfortune.

Unquestionably, in the years to come some novelist, poet, dramatist, or painter will seek to salvage the Petacci's story from the realm of facts. But such attempts to romanticize her will be dogged by this very film. The Petacci's final tragedy is that she did not exist before the age of the camera. From history's point of view this may be fortunate, inasmuch as it may stifle a lot of nonsense; from hers it is calamitous.

The luckier palace mistresses were those who were free to capture the world's fancy, no less than their lovers', before Daguerre. We know them not as they were but as they lived new lives and became new beings on the pens of writers or the brushes of artists. No doubt, we re-

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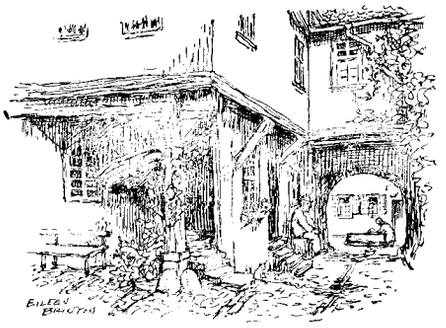
SCREEN

CORNEL WILDE
MAUREEN O'HARA
in
"HOMESTRETCH"
in technicolor
A 20th Century-Fox Film
•
In Person
HAZEL SCOTT
HENNY YOUNGMAN
CARL RAVAZZA
NOW ROXY 7 Ave. at 50 Street

IT OUTGASPS THE STAGE HIT THAT RAN 2 YEARS ON BROADWAY
HUMPHREY BOGART
BARBARA STANWYCK
ALEXIS SMITH
"The Two Mrs. Carrolls"
WARNERS' HOLLYWOOD
BROADWAY & 51st
OPENS 10:30 A.M. LATE MIDNIGHT FILM

The Academy Award Picture!
Winner of Nine Academy Awards!
'THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES'
ASTOR B'way & 45th St.



member them as being more beautiful and more fascinating by far than they were. We see them not as they were but as artists saw them. Moreover, we are tempted to believe that this is what they must have been. Even the Petacci fares better when we do not see her and her image is conjured by words. In the soon-to-be-published "Yank: the G.I. Story of the War" there is an admirable account by Sergeant Dan Polier of the capture of Clara and Mussolini by the Partisans.

"In the city hall at Dongo," writes Polier, "Clara Petacci sat back, her thin legs crossed, filing a fingernail she had broken during the excitement of the capture. She had asked the Partisans for a manicurist, but they laughed at her. She was wearing a blue woolen suit under her beaver coat; a green scarf was tied in a turban around her brown hair. On her breast was a delicate gold locket. In the lower right corner it bore the inscription: *'Clara—io sono te, tu sei me* (Clara—I am you, you are me).' It was signed 'Ben' and was dated Apr. 4, 1939 (when Mussolini met Clara) and Apr. 4, 1941 (when he gave her the locket)."

THE advantage Clara Petacci enjoys in Polier's paragraph is that the Sergeant *only seems* to have described her. What she actually looked like is left for us to supply according to our own romantic notions. The Sergeant leads us with his words to a picture we must finally paint for ourselves.

This is no new good fortune on the part of history's glamour girls, and no new device so far as authors are concerned. For all of us the beauty of Helen of Troy is the beauty of Marlowe's words describing her. The wise theatrical producer does not allow us to see the face of the actress playing Helen. We know her only as the abstract concept of loveliness created by Marlowe's music—fairer than the evening star, and capable of launching those thousand ships. The very vagueness of his description of her as the ideal beauty invites each person to make Helen beautiful in the terms of his own dreams.

The Petacci film can be said to mark the end of an epoch in historical romancing. It proves that the camera punctures the *maîtresse* myth by leaving nothing to the imagination. The imagination is concerned with what was not, but might be; with what is not, but could have been; with what could not be, but should be. Clara Petacci, alas, as the camera makes painfully clear, was only what she was.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

"Edgar" for Judge Lynch

THE Mystery Writers of America, Inc., this week dubbed Judge Lynch, keeper of The Criminal Record for *The Saturday Review*, best whodunit critic for 1946, bestowing upon him their annual "Edgar." Ceremonies took place at New York City's Henry Hudson Hotel, April 21. The occasion was the 106th anniversary of the publication of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"—regarded as the progenitor of all modern mystery thrillers. Judge Lynch (more lawfully known as William C. Weber) has been handing down verdicts on fictitious crimes for SRL readers since 1930.

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Melodic Study

COUNTERPOINT. By Walter Piston. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1947. 231 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by EDWARD TATNALL CANBY

THIS is an important book in its field, yet it falls between stools. It is not a strict textbook—yet it is near enough to the textbook area to be limited in its scope from the viewpoint of the musician who, textbook or no textbook, wants to get at the real stuff of all music.

Piston, laudably, bases his account entirely on music itself. His hundreds of illustrations are from the masters; none are invented to fit a rule. The volume treats of counterpoint, the structure and meaning of melodic line as found in music from the time of Bach through the end of the nineteenth century, a somewhat larger counterpoint than the so-called "Bach counterpoint" often used as a basis for musical training. Piston puts aside two other widely practised contrapuntal disciplines—the more pure, less harmonic counterpoint of the sixteenth century, and the traditional "strict counterpoint," an abstract discipline, studied for centuries by the great composers. Some outstanding teachers of composition feel the latter is more valuable today (being universal and not tied to any musical style) than the study of music of a particular period in the past.

The argument as to which of these disciplines is best will not be settled by back-turning, and the Piston volume should be of great interest to proponents of every teaching method. Its avoidance of over-simplification may make it hard for the beginner, but Piston rightly assumes that, minus a good ear and an intuitive sense of musical fitness, no one can expect to get far in any accurate, detailed analysis of music. There is no simple way.

To this reviewer it is disappointing that his volume puts aside a problem which Professor Piston of all people is "enormously well qualified to discuss, the intimate relationship between the counterpoint he speaks of and the dissonant contemporary counterpoint of which his own music furnishes the finest examples imaginable. It is to be hoped that Piston, following Hindemith and others, will go on to another book treating some of the principles of today's music in the same musicianly way in which he looks at the immediate past—for too few of us are aware that contemporary music, no matter how dissonant, if it is good at all must be just as well principled and as well ordered as any of the classics.

"One of the most shrewdly and temptingly arranged of all such collections; perhaps the job has hardly been done so well since the old original Oxford Book."
—CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

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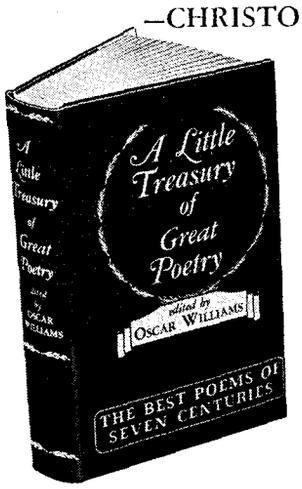

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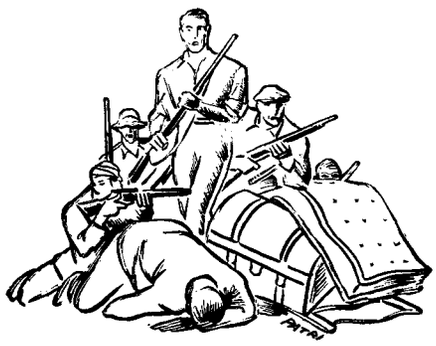
Drum-Pounding Agony

WRITE SORROW ON THE EARTH. By Charles Christian Wertenbaker. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 260 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

THE remembered impact of this book is one of dreadful brutality. Mr. Wertenbaker may have intended otherwise. In his story of the French maquis in their most desperate period of resistance, just before D-Day, there are accents upon the courage of these men, their idealism, and their abnegation; and, too, there is a love story of some complexity, which threads its way through the action and sets the stage for an internal drama. But it would take a writer of great spiritual power to create a love story or an idealism that could drown out the heavy drum-pounding of physical agony which is this novel's chief orchestration. What I shall remember most keenly is not the staunch personal integrity of Paul Boissiere of the French underground, or the stubborn fatalism of his friend Bob, the Spanish democrat—but what happened to them at the hands of the Nazis: the knuckle in the vise, the bayonet in the eye. There is the theme once more: man's inhumanity to man.

And it is important to note how different this is from the general run of violent stories that have become standard fare these last ten years or more, the Gestapo-agent tales, and the Chandler-Hammett variety of mayhem in the detective story. For these are, both of them, essentially and recognizably unreal. We come forth from reading them deliciously shaken by momentary horror as we were in our childhood by the dark fables of witches and monsters, and comfortably purged of our fears. We learned in these Gestapo tales and movies that the Nazi was a sick man, an uneasy introvert diseased in mind, unhealthy in body, perverse in sex, therefore a kind of monster atypical of humanity, a spot aberration in history, almost to be pitied, almost to be forgiven. It was possible to view him in these tales of horror and daring with the same godlike scorn which we bestow upon all the doomed villains of fiction.



Now read Mr. Wertenbaker's novel and taste of a greater horror than that. The terrible thing about the Nazis is not that they were insane, but that they were, and are, sane. Not that they were the sickened victims of irresistible compulsions, but that they did what they did with a will, with knowledge, with sound organization. The terrible thing about the courageous democrats is that they are destructible, that they can be made to cringe and cry out, and go under. Strip down the cops-and-robbers comedy and see it plain and deadly, as it is. Not monsters and heroes, but men doing things to other men, and the sense that these are not of one kind or time, not soon to be done with. At the time the Allied armies were landing in France the Nazis were raging across the landscape behind the landing, killing as they went, hunting out the underground and destroying the civilian populace with calculated savagery. Mr. Wertenbaker was there for *Time* magazine, as he has been most of the time since, and he saw. The last page and a half of his novel will give it to you in shocking epitome; the whole thing is a documentation and a preparation for that.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 201

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 201 will be found in the next issue.

KGG BCA OPHCASF DX

KSPBCEABPO KSA LD RABBAS

BCKL K FPLWGA LDBCPLW.

TDFAHC WGKLMPGG — BCA

MKLPBV DX NDWEKBPQPLW

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 200

There is a solemn luxury in grief.
WILLIAM MASON
English Garden.

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Sobs and Sex

MAYBE NEXT YEAR. By Cicely Schiller. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1947. 299 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by NANCY G. CHAIKIN

YOU could probably call Rose Weber a victim of World War I, since there is nothing else in her environment to account for the sordid turn which her life takes after the loss of her soldier-fiancé. At any rate, when Carl is killed, and a second engagement is broken (for unconvincing reasons), she adopts the motto, "Be nice to men but make them pay plenty." From that point on, her life becomes a series of almost identical affairs, carried on cynically and persistently, until her looks fade and, feeling that she has outlived her usefulness, she decides to commit suicide. The book opens as she is about to carry out this decision, and I don't think it will spoil anything if I tell you that, after the flashback which tells her story, Rosie's suicide plans are thwarted by a telephone call from her mother who needs her after all because her second husband has just died.

You should be able to surmise, from that summary, what you are likely to be up against in Miss Schiller's novel. Even if you can stand a certain amount of sentimentalization you will find the going tough when, from time to time, Rosie takes a minute from her love-making to haul an unfinished khaki sweater out of her bureau drawer and weep over the untimely death of Carl—"so young, so gay . . . ," etc. The book is a hotbed of clichés and stereotypes, and the dialogue, sometimes even in its most serious moments, sounds like a take-off on a bad movie; the characters even think in clichés. As for the sex scenes—they are all very much alike and sometimes downright offensive in their pointlessness and their apparent attempt to arouse public interest by a now notorious method. All in all, it is rather sad to see a perfectly good sociological situation like this one clouded and abused by unconvincing and hackneyed treatment.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 682)

LELAND STOWE:
WHAT TIME REMAINS

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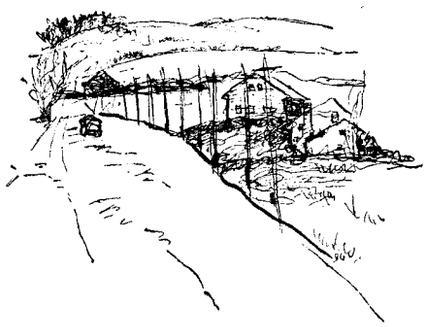
Call of the Hudson Lorelei

THE WORLD AROUND THE MOUNTAIN. By Alice Beal Parsons. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1947. 219 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by
CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN

MRS. PARSONS, in her latest series of mountain musings, succeeds in inciting definite envy on the part of the reader. It is not so much that we long to entrench ourselves in Nyack. It is rather our recognition of and salute to a pattern of life. Of all requisites this one guarantees contented living, bounded by success and, regrettably, just a shade of smugness.



The call of the Hudson Lorelei has been answered by many minds. Actors, artists, and writers dig into that earth and find it good. Of course they are sophisticated; of course they are traveled; but the touch of the common man is on them too. Otherwise Mr. Duffy, Nyack's native, would not philosophize to Mrs. Parsons on immortality. "Well," he assured her, "mebbe there's room in the Nyack section of heaven for all that's livin' here now."

Mrs. Parsons does come down from the mountain to do an utterly charming vignette of commuters' unity on the regular bus run, and to paint springtime Fifth Avenue in glowing colors. New York, its streets, its buildings, and its parties lure her in April. The pathetic pressure of city dwellers is realized; so, also, are the vast excitements of the town. Mrs. Parsons is blessed with sight, a sense given to so few of us. It is a mighty one and useful anywhere. But for meditation, for plenty of time to appraise, to evaluate, and to create, there is that Palisade paradise. Here let us rest with Mrs. Parsons, our return trip ticket securely and reassuringly in our pocket.

In "The World Around the Mountain" not all of the people are perfect all of the time. Mrs. McCullogh talks poor, does typing and mending in her lavish modern house, and tries unsuccessfully to drive her high-minded husband back to slick writing. Then there are Emily and Saxe Norton. They wish to conceal their wealth, believing as they do in equality. As Emily puts it, any house will do for them "just so long as it has at least twelve bedrooms and looks as if it didn't." She gets it, imports celebrities, and runs bi-weekly evenings without either alcohol or understanding.

Mrs. Parsons treats foibles tolerantly, bitter only against the endowed Communist on the one hand and the too leisured class on the other. Her credo is work. From nine-thirty to lunch, from one-thirty to four, then a walk and tea. It's pat. Undisturbed even by her altogether beguiling grandson, she surveys and remembers. Christian conviction in the seventeenth century is treated in "The Verge of Darkness." War's evil and politics are dealt with in "The Deep Well." She quibbles with Dorothy Thompson and Quentin Reynolds for their usage of the word "humble," and she states her profoundly hopeful belief in this present as a rebirth of greatness.

Mrs. Parsons is a bright, knowledgeable writer, and can tell a sheer story brilliantly, as she does in "The World and Annalee," but there is a tendency towards too tightly-packed sentences. Transcending all, however, is her sense of romance, of imagination, of making every detail of living grist for her mill.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Poppies. McCrae: "In Flanders Fields." 2. Heather. Dickinson: "Chartless." 3. Lotus. Laurence: "Kashmiri Song." 4. Hyacinth. Fitzgerald: "The Rubaiyat." 5. Lilies. D. G. Rossetti: "The Blessed Damozel." 6. Lilacs. Whitman: "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." 7. Rose. Coleridge: "The Ancient Mariner." 8. Marigolds. Keats: "I Stood Tiptoe Upon a Little Hill." 9. Harbell. D. G. Rossetti. 10. Asphodel. Pope: "Ode on St. Cecelia's Day." 11. Buttercups. Browning: "Home Thoughts from Abroad." 12. Asters. Carman: "A Vagabond Song." 13. Daffodils. Wordsworth: "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud." 14. Rosemary. Shakespeare: "Hamlet." 15. Primrose. Goldsmith: "The Deserted Village." 16. Rhodora. Emerson: "The Rhodora." 17. Sun-flower. Moore: "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms." 18. Laburnam. Hood: "I Remember, I Remember." 19. Acacia. Tennyson: "Maud." 20. Magnolia. Whittier: "The Garrison of Cape Ann."

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Tangled Trio

EXPERIMENT IN SPRINGTIME. By Margaret Millar. New York: Random House. 1947. 279 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

INTO the old triangular situation of a man, his wife, and her lover, Mrs. Millar has managed to inject some very modern notions about allergies and neuroses and to add such contemporary characters as a recently discharged aviator and a slangy bobby-soxer. She studies her characters with a psychiatrist's insight, records their conversations with an excellent ear for divergent speech habits, and, like the competent writer of detective stories that she is, brings her story to a succession of climaxes involving considerable suspense.

Charles Pearson, a man of wealth, had married an ordinary girl who, after going to high school and business college, became a stenographer. Between them lay not only a difference of early environment but various barriers of temperament that made them mutually unhappy. Charles needed certainty in his marriage, the assurance that Martha truly loved him, and this, as well as his sterility, made him at once over-humble and over-possessive. When sickness, both mental and physical, laid him low, certain latent suspicions of his wife became exaggerated. He felt that she longed for his death and he himself unconsciously cultivated a death-wish.

But Martha was no murderess. Early in life she had had a lover who had jilted her and this blow to her pride and affections left her without warmth for her marriage and with a sense of sin that found compensation in ultra-correct behavior. Bewildered by Charles's introspective nature, antagonized by his sarcasm and his physical weakness, she met his advances dutifully, though so coldly and secretively that she gave him some reason for his lack of faith in her. And with the return of her old lover, Steve, even her technical fidelity to the ailing Charles eventually cracked.

Steve, lonely and disillusioned after his return from the war, found himself at loose ends, unable to settle down, always awaiting some other time to begin to work. He was naturally drawn back to his old love.

Certainly, those who have enjoyed Mrs. Millar's detective stories will find here her usual facility and competence, but they may feel that she has chosen to dissect persons more appropriate to the cold air of the mystery tale than to the warmer climate of the psychological novel.

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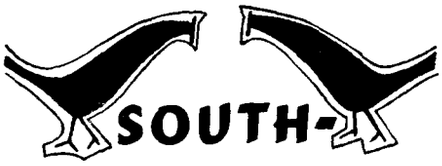

SOUTH-WESTERNERS WRITE

Edited by T. M. Pearce and A. P. Thomason
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THE FINE ARTS

HISTORY OF A PICTURE

THE barrage grows heavier against the collection of contemporary American paintings bought recently by our State Department for exhibition in foreign countries. The reactionary press has brought up its big guns. Salvo one: the State Department's art is culturally un-American—"Load! Fire!" Salvo two: the paintings are subversive, *i.e.*, Communist—"Load! Fire!" Salvo three: they are degenerate, possibly mad, certainly a waste of the taxpayer's money — "FIRE!" More shells follow, but after the third burst it requires no ballistics expert to detect a similarity between this kind of ammunition and that used by the Nazis to blast the best artists out of Germany. And there is not much we can do about it except hope that the State Department's courageous project will not be wiped out before we reach a calmer time, when the American virtues of tolerance, curiosity, fairness, and daring will reassert themselves and put an end to such patent nonsense.*

Occasionally, however, opponents of the State Department's collection attempt to pick off its pictures one by one. They do so by interpreting the paintings' iconography, seeking to prove by textual reading the worthlessness or iniquity of the art our Government is sending abroad. In this connection it may be of interest to consider the case of a famous modern American picture, not involved in the State Department purchases, which was once comparably deciphered by the press.

The picture is Peter Blume's "South of Scranton," completed in 1931 and awarded first prize in the Carnegie International Exhibition of 1934, Blume being the youngest artist ever to be so honored. The painting now belongs to the Metropolitan Museum. It became that museum's property in 1942 by winning a purchase prize in the huge "Artists for Victory" exhibition; it was recently sent to the show of American painting at the Tate Gallery, London, as one of the outstanding works by a living American artist. But back in 1934, when the Carnegie award was announced, "South of Scranton" created an amazing rumpus in the newspapers, as will appear.

The evolution of the painting was clearly and simply described by the artist in a radio broadcast, afterwards condensed and printed in the *Carnegie Magazine* (1934). During the winter of 1930-31 Blume had driven South, by way of Scranton, Bethlehem, and the Shenandoah Valley, to Charleston, South Carolina. His car was old, and he stopped often for repairs, and gradually there accrued in his mind a series of images—the coal quarries at Scranton, the false-front houses in towns he passed, a feudal-looking traffic tower, the German cruiser *Emden* anchored in Charleston harbor, its sailors doing vigorous calisthenic exercises on deck, so that they seemed to soar through the air. He decided to combine these images in a single work of art, though their origins varied as to time and place. Of course innumerable artists had done this before him — Giotto and Masaccio, to mention only two gilt-edged securities in precedent's account. There was, however, this difference to be noted: whereas the scenes in medieval and Renaissance paintings were usually related as incidents of an accepted story or legend, Blume's were assembled solely because of their dream-like perseverance in his imagination.

EVEN allowing for this difference, prepared by art of the preceding twenty years, it is difficult to understand the furor evoked by "South of Scranton." To begin with, the public disliked the picture exceedingly. Of roughly 5,000 votes cast in a popularity contest at the Carnegie show, only twenty-two went to Blume's canvas, while Frederick J. Waugh's "Tropic Seas" won easily with a score of 1,920. In a local sense there may have been something symbolic in the preference thus expressed, for many of Pennsylvania's citizens obviously felt that Blume should have gone farther afield for his subject if planning to treat it in this eccentric manner. Scranton resented its identification with so "unlovely" a painting, and Abram S. Galland spoke up for the city and the state in a letter to the *New York*

**On April 4 the press announced the Secretary of State had suspended foreign tours of the collection, pending an artists' committee's decision on its quality. No further funds for purchase will be allotted. Accounts of the action varied, but all stressed the charge—"a waste of the taxpayer's money." Actually the pictures were bought at great discounts. If sold today, nearly all would bring far more than they cost.*

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Herald Tribune for November 5, 1934. He therein declared that he had lived south of Scranton all his life, and summarized his views as follows: 1) the place shown in Blume's picture was not to be found in Pennsylvania 2) investigation south of the Pennsylvania border should be made 3) why blame Scranton? Mr. Robert Benchley tried to assuage local wrath by moving the painting's locale elsewhere, in a parody published in *The New Yorker* on November 24, 1934; his article was accompanied by a self-invented graphic image entitled "The Northeast Corner of Federber and Gallos Streets, Worcester, Mass."

The Pennsylvania newspapers were quick to connect public mistrust of Blume's canvas with larger issues, and "South of Scranton" became to an extraordinary degree the subject of political interpretation. This tendency was resisted in certain quarters, however. The *Pittsburgh Press* for October 31 called Mr. Dudley Crafts Watson to task for averring in a lecture that the picture was expressive of the New Deal. Not even the Republican Governor Pinchot, the paper declared, could fairly blame the Democrats for that "famous libel on Scranton."

But such ideological restraint was soon swept aside by a flood of political conjecture, and the same newspaper's Douglas Naylor, looking hard at the picture's flying sailors, decided: "As to the men in shorts, probably it [*sic*] depicts a psychological repression—that is the way men hope to play around when the New Deal gives them a chance to enjoy life." Mr. Naylor added: "It seems reasonable to conclude that the cannon atop the queer turret is symbolic of capitalism." Residents of other states chimed in, and a taxpayer of Amityville, Long Island, published in several newspapers an impassioned letter holding the Roosevelt Administration responsible for the picture.

TO those interested in a more restricted political scene, the painting was equally provocative, especially as a basis for cartoons. The *Post-Gazette's* Mr. Cy Hungerford translated Blume's German sailors into the Pennsylvania politicos, Earle and Guffey, bounding through the air with Mr. Pinchot in hot pursuit, while voters watched the proceedings from a boat deck. The most elaborate cartoon appeared in the *Pittsburgh Press* for October 21. Its title was "South of Dixmont," in reference to the city's lunatic asylum. Through the medium of photo-montage, it portrayed such Pittsburgh landmarks as the Liberty Tubes, the Banksville

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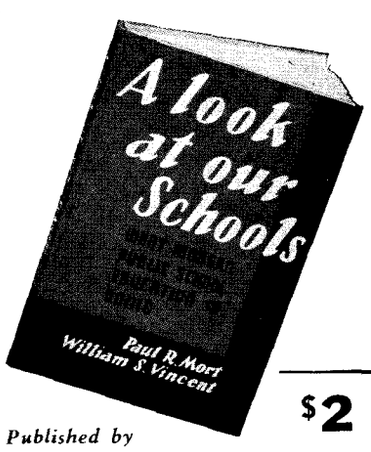

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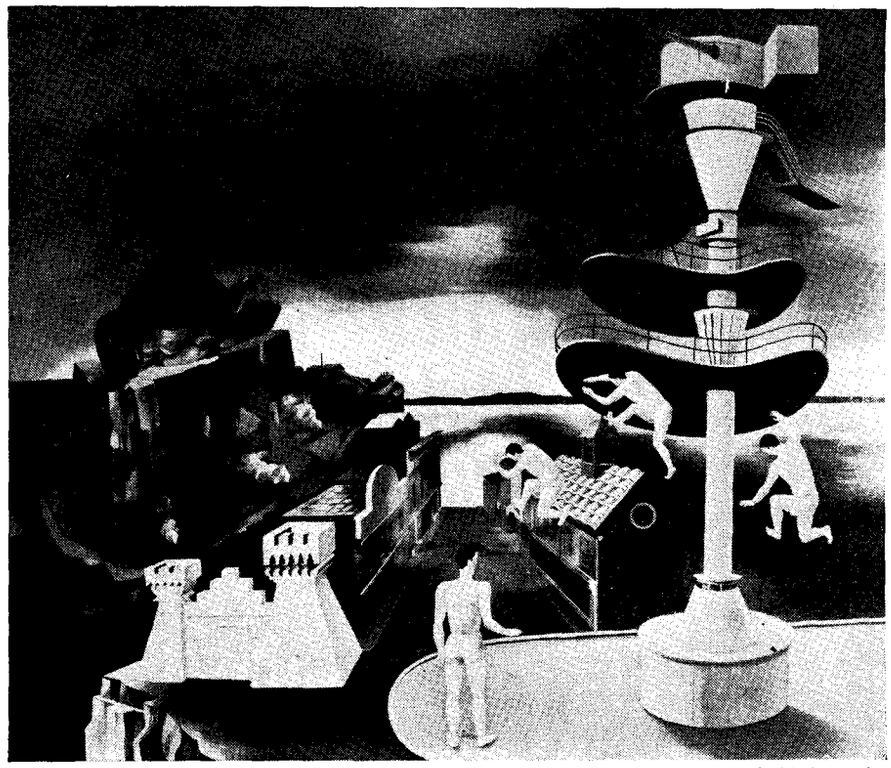

—*Courtesy, Museum of Modern Art.*

"South of Scranton," by Peter Blume.

garbage dump, and the South Park Pool, complete with bathing beauties and "Pitt backs going through the U.S.C. line." The chief protagonist of this scene was Mr. McNair, Mayor of Pittsburgh, who was shown embarking on a jaunt to Europe, wearing a sort of yachting cap. Apparently the citizenry did not want Mr. McNair to go to Europe at all; anyway not, emphatically not, in that hat.

The Pennsylvania clergy on the whole found "South of Scranton" a sympathetic subject for sermons on the evils of materialism, though the Rev. Thomas J. Glynn ventured an unfavorable estimate on art-historical grounds. "The cubism in this picture," he said in the *Post-Gazette*, "is easily noticed from the pyramid of coal. . . . The cubist school of art is not popular among first-class artists. Even our big, practically built skyscrapers are now being erected along artistic lines." A more typical comment was that of Dr. C. Marshall Muir, reported in the same newspaper. "Mr. Blume," Dr. Muir told his flock, "is saying the democracy of America is like unto his picture, 'South of Scranton'. . . . If Mr. Blume has experienced nothing else in America, he has experienced the fact that chaos is king, having driven out God."

BUT did Blume himself intend "South of Scranton" to have the political, social, or moral meaning so insistently found in it? We have his impeccable word that he did not, though he was careful to point out in another connection that the artist may not always be conscious of the symbolic content of his works. (A strategem of many enemies of modern art is to imply, contrarily, that artists slyly conceal from the public a meaning which, if understood, would cause anger and bring retribution.) Still, it is difficult to believe that Blume was deceived in the present case, particularly since he later completed an openly political work, "The Eternal City," in which his hatred of fascism was unmistakably expressed by a green, jack-in-the-box image of Mussolini.

And no one, I think, can study "South of Scranton" carefully without coming to the conclusion that it is simply a panoramic travel picture; for me it is brilliantly conceived and executed. Despite its dream-like elements, it is more nearly related ideologically to the painting of Scranton that George Inness completed in 1855 for the Delaware and Lackawanna Railroad than to the political allegories of, say, the modern Mexicans. Unless we consider Blume's uneasy reaction to the German cruiser *Emden* a warning of things to come, there would seem to be no "message" in the picture whatever.

Perhaps there is a lesson of caution in this for those iconographers who see all shades of red when they look today at the paintings acquired by our State Department.

JAMES THRALL SOBY.

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THOUGHTS AMONG MARBLE

(Continued from page 8)

> much of the means of life, too much industry, too much commerce . . . The bourgeois system has become too narrow to contain the wealth which it creates. How does the bourgeoisie overcome these crises? On the one hand, by compelling the destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other hand, by the conquest of new markets and the more thorough exploitation of the old markets. And with what result? With the result that they pave the way for more widespread and more destructive crises, and at the same time diminish the means whereby those crises can be avoided.

It is a close picture of the world of the nineteen-thirties, struggling with its quotas and controls and limitation of output against the furious productivity of science and machine. Then the war struck. Things differed—for a while.

Marx underestimated the elasticity of capitalism, the toughness of the bourgeoisie, the absorption into bourgeois prosperity of the better-paid proletarians. Nor did he sufficiently realize the possibility of dictatorship going the other way; the praetorian guard, not the proletarian, might tilt the balance and those very praetorian braves be found in proletarian homes. But there is no denying his stature as a prophet. Many have given the world an idea; few, working in obscurity, have seen the idea so quickly powerful that it has found myriads to fight and die for it. It may be said that these would have done the same for socialism, with or without Marx. Perhaps, but he solidified the vague loyalties and aspirations; he was doctrinal, and doctrine does count in the affairs even of unlettered and violent men. Furiously the intellectual followers haggled over Marxian texts, as others over Biblical. Every Socialist conference became an arena of contending doctors, an orgy of schism. And, while the sectaries of Socialism bickered, the practical devotees kept their passion fresh and waited for the day.

So there below the narrow, unimposing, "flat job" lies the man who shook the world—with an argument, even with an argument which had to begin by countering its own unreadability. How many of the Party have waded through it? Not many Christians, I fancy, have read the whole of the Bible or even the whole of the New Testament. A far smaller proportion of those dubbed Marxians have read a quarter of "Das Kapital." Yet his name, not Lenin's or Stalin's, denotes the doctrine and is, as such, triumphant over death.

In these days, whatever we may think of the Marxian performance and its Russian results, it is something to reflect that an idea, stiffly worked out in logic, can be so operative. It touched the Effective Ten Per Cent who make all Movements, for good or ill. Shaw has stated that, at the age of twenty-six, he found the turning-point of his intellectual career—

> Marx was a revelation. His abstract economics, I discovered later, were wrong, but he rent the veil. He opened my eyes to the facts of history and civilization, gave me a fresh conception of the universe, provided me with a plan and a mission in life. I went back to the Democratic Federation, burning with new zeal, full of the new gospel, only to find that not a soul there, except Hyndman and myself, had read a word of Marx.

So, after wandering through the marbled acres, past the vaults and catacombs of the mighty—none of your "flat jobs" for them—I climb up through Waterlow Park to the summit of Highgate Hill where Whittington turned again, Bacon caught his death of cold, Nell Gwynne lived in sin, and Housman wrote "A Shropshire Lad." Thence back to Hampstead through the noble beeches of Ken Wood. It is a good country walk—astoundingly good considering that one is never more than five or six miles from the center of London. At many a stage of it one has reason to believe in reason and one is persuaded to trust in the power of mind, word, and book. Men, after all, are led, whether rightly or astray, to hell or to paradise, by the power of the pen. And to be assured of this, at least for the duration of a stroll, is some consolation in a world which seems at times to be so largely ruled by bluff and bluster, passion, slogans, and fisticuffs.

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"Closer to Blood Than to Ink"

RESIDENCE ON EARTH, AND OTHER POEMS. By Pablo Neruda. Translated by Angel Flores. Norfolk: New Directions. 1946. 205 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by MUNA LEE

SOME years ago Federico García Lorca presented the Chilean newcomer, Pablo Neruda, to a Madrid audience as "a poet closer to death than to philosophy, closer to grief than to memory, closer to blood than to ink; a poet filled with mysterious voices that — happily — not even he can interpret."

The fifty-four poems of Neruda's "Residence on Earth," with Spanish texts facing Angel Flores's admirable translations, are chosen with balance and discernment from seven volumes (one "in progress") published from 1925 to 1945. They demonstrate the transition of the man and the poet from uninterpretable voices to simple words; from the will to die to the refusal to be extinguished; from poetry of the iridescence and corruption on the surface of life to poetry of the spark and ember inmost in death.

The cataclysm dividing Neruda's earlier from his later work, reorientating his philosophy and largely transforming his style, was the Spanish War, which found him, in his thirties, already one of the most controversial figures in Hispanic letters, and Chilean consul at Madrid. His pre-war poems in general derived either from disillusioned self-mockery or from what he himself calls telurianism. In the one mood he wrote,

> I lie in ambush, then, for the inanimate and the sorrowful,
> And the strange testimony which I bring
> With cruel efficiency and written in ashes
> Is the form of oblivion which I prefer

And in the other, such things as the vibrant "Apogee of Celery":

> Its taste of fireflies . . .
> Its disorderly scissors. . . .

In both manifestations, his influence on contemporary poetry has exceeded that of any other living Latin American; a fact due largely to his extraordinarily provocative images. Neruda, according to the Ecuadorian poet Carrera Andrade, "does not invent but merely removes the mask from reality, announcing its secret name and secret mission." Belatedly, in 1945, the Chilean National Prize for Literature was granted to Pablo Neruda. In the same year, the Nobel Prize for Literature was bestowed on another Chilean poet, Gabriela Mistral. That the critical opinion of Hispanic America upholds the verdict of Santiago instead of the verdict of Stockholm has never been in doubt.

Neruda's present work, becoming increasingly simpler in structure and more direct in impact, though retaining its characteristic ellipsis and prosopopoeia, is impassioned with protest against man's hazard and mischance. In 1940, Amado Alonso, in an intensive and extensive analysis, declared that Neruda's poetry might be characterized in three of its own lines:

> Dreams that gush forth from my heart in froth,
> Dust of dreams that run like black horsemen,
> Dreams full of speed and misfortune.

Today the dreams gush rather as lava than as froth, run as sleet or hail rather than as dust, but are still black horsemen. Much of this present poetry is concerned with the desperate despair that Neruda sees as Europe and the desperate hope that he feels as America. Of the one he cries,

> So many tombs, so much martyrdom, so much
> Galloping of beasts on the star!
> Nothing, not even victory,
> Will erase the terrible hole of blood:
> Nothing, neither the sea nor the passing
> Of sand and time, nor the geraniums burning
> Over the grave.

And the other:

> Guard your light, O fatherland, hold aloft
> Your hard grain-ear of hope in the midst
> Of the blind fearful air!

Credit Notice

On the cover, issue of October 28, 1944, *SRL* published a wood engraving of Wendell Willkie by Frances O'Brien Garfield. There was no mention of the fact that the engraving was based upon a photograph by Philippe Halsman. Our attention has been called to this omission. We are glad to give this credit, however late, to Mr. Halsman.

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Haiku in English

A PEPPER-POD. By Shoson (Kenneth Yasuda). New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 125 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by JOHN L. MISH

THE fine art of appreciating haiku, those exquisite flowers of Japanese poetry, could not be better taught than by K. Yasuda in the introduction to his book. Many ideas expressed in his excellent sketch are highly original, as when the structure of a haiku is compared to that of a painting, and words like "vertical" are applied to the description of poems. Mr. Yasuda makes us feel, however, that he understands the underlying thoughts of the poets in an even deeper sense than can be conveyed by mere words.

The whole charm of this peculiarly Japanese form of verse consists in its elusive quality. We are given the outline of a picture in words, as it were, but with no details—these have to be filled in from the depths of our own feeling. Since such a lack of "precision" is, to say the least, unusual in our own poetry, it is extremely difficult to arrive at a satisfactory translation of haiku. To render the sense of the original clearly without losing its succinctness in the process is well-nigh impossible in English. One has to unite the streams of two cultures in one's own nature in order to make a successful attempt. K. Yasuda, the Japanese-American, has shown that it can be done. His translations come as near the original as is possible between two so far divergent languages.

A similar attempt to translate haiku in English while keeping as much as possible of its delicate spirit was made some years ago by H. G. Henderson in his "The Bamboo Broom." The poems translated in both these works are often the same, and the idea of riming the first and third lines appears to have originated with Mr. Henderson, who also foresaw the possibility of writing haiku directly in English. Mr. Yasuda has now courageously shown the way to do it, and his "experiments in English" have all the tender grace and elusive charm of their Japanese counterparts.

There is, however, one difficulty: will the English-speaking public as a whole develop a taste for these poetic sketches, being accustomed hitherto to more substantial fare? Will people appreciate the haiku verse for its own sake, even if it is shorn of its exotic charm? In other words, can this form of poetry be made to take root in English literature? If it does, an important new link in the esthetic understanding between East and West will have been forged.

Jangled Imagery

THE WOUND AND THE WEATHER. By Howard Moss. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc. 1946. 54 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by
JEAN STARR UNTERMEYER

THE wound is real if, by chance, the reader, like the reviewer, regards language as a trust rather than a toy. It is both possible and permissible to describe the irrational in rational terms, but to make language the mirror of the irrational is to betray man's divine reason on which, despite his historical lapses from rational action, he must and can build, even without theological assumptions.

Some of these lyrics are quite conventional, but the general impression after a couple of readings is that of awryness. Within the strict confines of well-disciplined metrical forms, the fancies of Howard Moss, who evidently exploits as well as accepts the designation "surrealist," leap, mate, jostle, and sound as within a cage. But these strange conceptions are less like dark forms emerging through the sprung trap-door of the subconscious, possessed, therefore, of a racial inheritance, than rootless creatures of air springing from the top of the head—but not the head of Jove—and disporting themselves with more rhyme than reason. In fact, it seems at times as if rhyme and alliteration, impish if not demonic forces within the language, were dictating the images. Doing so, they rob poetry of one of its prerogatives, stated so simply by Robert Frost as the power to "create a momentary stay against confusion." In these pages, for the most part, nobody appears to be in control, neither the singing and spiritual anima, nor animus, the order-creating logos.

It may be that, in times as anarchical as ours, poets do not want to assume the responsibility implict in Shelley's definition: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." Admittedly, legislating our world is a heavy, heavy task, but on the other hand poets are not therefore free to be verbalistic playboys, pursuing a lonely, uncommunicative game witn themselves.

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And daisies shining where I pass—

All these are eloquent of you,
To whom the very least is dear;
And yet the chicory's frail blue
Does most, I think, to bring you near.

RAYMOND HOSKEN.

* * *

I have received the following from Charles T. Littleton of this city:

Mark Twain relates in one of his stories, the furore up in Heaven when an obscure tailor, Billings by name, from somewhere in Tennessee, arrives in the Celestial realm. Shakespeare is proud to sit at his feet while at the banquet in his honor; it is Homer who stands behind his chair and waits upon him. Yet this was an unknown poet although recognized by his peers as the greatest of them all. No mortal had ever read his verses. They had never even been published. In fact, during his lifetime he had been merely the butt of his contemporaries.

There were many such back in the twenties. For every Eugene O'Neil, Floyd Dell, Ben Hecht, or Maxwell Bodenheim, there were a dozen other real personalities in Greenwich Village and Union Square whose names have rarely reached the public except in column-long eulogies at their passing.

Looking back at those days a score or more years ago, one is struck by the renaissance of thinking which followed the First World War. There was a complete examination and overhauling of ideas which is sadly lacking today. It was a time of great optimism, for everyone felt that if the problems of the world had not as yet all been solved, at least their solution was attainable if not already in sight.

Thoughts were precious then and intellectual integrity the highest goal. There was no compromise with the popular taste in these philosophers, writers, and artists whose books were never printed and pictures never bought. Yet they were men and women of character. In an earlier age they might have been looked on as saints. They were in this world but not of this world. Their wants were few, a cold water flat on the East Side, where they could paint or write or dream, a meagre meal every once in a while was all they required. Yet this was often beyond their reach.

As chairman of the old Dill Pickle Club on 14th Street where they were wont to congregate, the writer knew them well and mourns their passing. There are but few of them left. Ike Shepps still holds forth at Columbus Circle with his satirical tirades against the futile money-grubbing pursuits of humanity. Jo Silverman, who studied medicine in England and then never practised it because he felt that too little was known about the art, today in his eighty-third year still pursues his studies of Spinoza and the humanities in his hovel on East 3rd Street. Dan O'Brien, King of the Hoboes, no longer delights his listeners with his wit and rich Irish brogue. He merely awaits his end in one of the city's charitable institutes. Joe Gould still works on his "History" of our times. But where are the Wilkesbarrs, Pollocks, Marchands, Jack Joneses, and Lizzy Davises, all gone like the snows of yesteryear?

The "Sirfessor," as Wilkesbarr was called, rated a column-and-a-half obituary in *The New York Times*. Is there today in existence a single copy of his "Gospel According to Malfew Seklew," to which he devoted his entire life? His was the doctrine of enlightened selfishness. He sought the rise of a race of "Supercrats," an aristocracy of brains and skill that would rescue the world from its rising slough of mediocrity. His was a voice "crying in the wilderness." A Cockney by birth, he had sung with the D'Oyly Carte Company. He had known Shaw and Wells and the Webbs intimately, yet never was his work known by more than a few dozens of his friends.

Abe Pollock was a collar salesman until in middle life, like Gauguin, he began to paint. His work was praised by some critics, scoffed at by others but it never sold. Perhaps Michelangelo passes him the finger bowls in Heaven.

Dr. Marchand had been a pro-

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fessor at Columbia University. During the anti-German outbreak of World War I, he was fired from his job. He never recovered from the blow. He spent his life on the personal project of coordinating all human knowledge. His manuscripts? Who knows where they are today!

There was Helen Langdon, who knew more about Oriental art than some curators of museums. She died in a garret (it was whispered of starvation), yet she could never bring herself to part with her precious Cinnabar vases and Japanese sword-guards.

Those were the days when ideas were all important, when Pollock and Vincent Beltrone holding opposite views on the subject of art —almost but not quite coming to blows about their theories—could argue far into the night before a group of enthralled listeners.

When Leon Samson first read his manuscript on the "New Humanism," the entire intellectual body of the town was split into "pro" and "anti" factions.

Yes, ideas were important then and poetry was important. John Cabbage with his "Sea Chanteys," Jack Sellers, Anton Romatka, Lew Ney each had his defenders and detractors, but they were sincere and judged them by their poetry and not as today by their political orientation.

It is amusing to note how many of the former dwellers within their "ivory towers" today have hung "to let" signs upon them and have rushed into the arms of the "proletariat." For them perhaps, thinking is no longer necessary. Still the prospect of a world without the Sirfessor and his kind is anything but pleasant.

Where are the youngsters who are to take their places? Who will dare to question the dogmatism of the right or the left? Who will examine every self-ordained savior and demagogue and puncture stuffed shirts with an ever-ready arsenal of barbed wit?

Will they perhaps be found among the student bodies of our universities or will their war training and their exposure to college curricula squeeze out the last drops of individualism that they may have retained? What can we expect of a generation reared on comic strips and movies? Perhaps a revulsion, perhaps a re-awakening of a burning love for Democracy which is the only cradle for Nature's masterpiece—the individual Ego.

* * *

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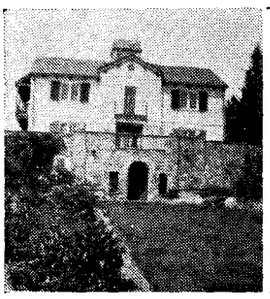

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A-26

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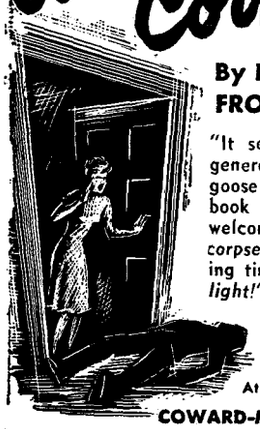

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	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
COPLAND, A LINCOLN PORTRAIT. *a*). N. Y. Philharmonic, Rodzinski; Kenneth Spencer. Columbia X 266 (2) $3 *b*). Boston Symphony, Koussevitzky; Melvin Douglas. Victor M 1088 (2) $2.85	Both are fine recordings. Philharm. has more detail, is closer-to; Boston has greater resonance, better ensemble. Both have excellent highs, good balance betw. voice and orch.	A A—	Neck-and-neck. Boston tempo faster; a slightly more integrated, smoother performance, but both are good playing. Diffs. in interpretation well worth study. Spencer is barytonish full-voiced; Douglas more homespun in style.
PROKOFIEFF, SYMPHONY #5, Op. 100. *a*). N. Y. Philharmonic, Rodzinski. Columbia M 661 (5) $6 *b*). Boston Symphony, Koussevitzky. Victor M 1095 (5) $5.85	Here, a marked diff. N. Y. strings are sharp, steely; Boston's smooth, no edge. N. Y. version is a clearer, sharper recording, better highs; less hall resonance.	A A to A—	A long, diffuse work, but nevertheless it clearly is from a master of skilled musical composition. It grows. Again Boston version is tighter, more exciting—yet not much to choose; both are fine.
BEETHOVEN, "MOONLIGHT" SONATA, Op. 27, #2. *a*). Vladimir Horowitz. Victor M 1115 (2) $2.85 *b*). Oscar Levant. Columbia X 273 (2) $3	Horowitz's piano is recorded a bit thin, but with good resonance; Levant's is fuller, deader.	A— A	Much to be said for Levant's 1st mvt.—after that Horowitz takes over, esp. in last mvt. Compare with Serkin, C X 237.
DE FALLA, EL AMOR BRUJO. *a*). Hollywood Bowl Orch. Stokowski; Nan Merriman. Victor M 1089 (3) $3.85 *b*). Pittsburgh Symph. Reiner; Carol Brice. Columbia M 633 (3) $4	Diff. greater still: Pittsb. version accentuates tone colors; brilliant highs, harsh in loud spots—H. Bowl recording is blurred, narrow, often too low. But Merriman is more naturally recorded; Brice is too close.	A— A—	The original ballet music, with voice; includes Ritual Fire Dance. Stokowski's is done with flair; Reiner's has beautiful detail. Merriman's Carmen-style voice, enunciation, better for this music; orchestrally I'd pick Reiner.

EYES AVERTED

THE parallelisms above illustrate some recent competition between the two major companies, Victor and Columbia. There are also Victor's "Messiah," announced on the heels of Columbia's (it won't be out until next year); the simultaneous announcement by both companies of contracts with portions of the Metropolitan Opera Company and two recent and similar books on records featuring respectively the records of the two companies (*SRL* April 19).

I'm prepared to defend the actual duplication, if, as above, the records are worthwhile. It is gratifying to have not one but two good choices, interestingly different in detail.

What seems a trifle absurd is not the duplication itself, but the presently attendant hocus-pocus, the prevailing air of mystery, the plenitude of round-eyed gossip, of hot tips and innuendos and amateur detectivizing, and above all the evident lack of any sort of official diplomatic liaison between these great Powers! There is, in fact, a remarkable isolation, considering that to the consumer as to the critic Victor and Columbia records are a matter of constant comparison and intermixture. These two enormous organizations—so inextricably coupled in the record world—are constrained each to act as though the other didn't exist; like two well-bred mastiffs they walk stiffly around each other, looking very carefully in the opposite direction.

I suggest that a livelier sense of humor in the rival publicity departments might help: accordingly, this column offers a fine, fat album (by a competing company of course) to the first copy writer of either concern to get away with the name of the unmentionable *other* company, in cold print. I further suggest that it would be a fine idea if the gentlemen of both companies should get together and devote themselves singlemindedly to the playing of each other's records.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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TRADE WINDS

(*Continued from page 5*)

change the tags to read *three* dollars. I left my wife in Boston and she may open the package." Deliveries are wrapped so beautifully that many recipients haven't got the heart to open them for days.

Every holiday season, Neiman-Marcus hosts a dinner party for a thousand or so of the best-heeled gentlemen in Texas, who, in a rosy haze of caviar, champagne, the finest foods, and the most beautiful models, buy Christmas gifts for their dear ones that come to about five times what they intended to spend. This year, a fire destroyed the entire shoe stock a few weeks before Christmas. Forty-eight hours later, Stanley Marcus, by some sorcery known only to himself, had reassembled a stock valued at $35,000 wholesale. Of course, the store's stock of everything was considerably smaller when my wife concluded her visit, but I prefer not to linger on those gruesome details.

MR. DE GOLYER once asked Neiman-Marcus to send some costume jewelry over to his office; he wanted to make a modest anniversary gift to his wife. A suave salesman arrived with several pieces, priced from forty to sixty dollars each. He saved until last an emerald ring. Mr. De Golyer has always had a weakness for emeralds. "I think I like this best," he said. "How much is it?" The salesman coughed discreetly and murmured, "$55,000." De Golyer challenged Stanley Marcus another time to find him one item in the store that sold for a dollar. Stanley searched for some time, and finally came up with a pocket handkerchief.

The public relations genius of Neiman-Marcus is Marihelen McDuff. She arranged the first party the store ever gave exclusively for members of the press. While it was at its height, the Jap surrender came through. Stanley Marcus called for silence and announced the end of the war. One reporter remarked, "Wouldn't you know it!"

In her spare time, Miss McDuff has organized a potentially powerful new organization named "Neurotics National," designed principally for advertising magnates, editors, publicists, and people in general who have been rejected by Alcoholics Anonymous. The club's official organ will be named *The Daily Dilemma*. If we can just get the country's neurotics into one organization," muses Miss McDuff, "we'll be a bigger force than the CIO or the Southern Democrats."

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You only need to like music (*any* kind of music) to step informally into the company of Johann Sebastian Bach (sorry, no floor show!), Georg Friedrich Handel (who could make a beautiful dollar), Papa Haydn (a very nice hard-working man), Wolfgang A. Mozart (and what a kicking around *he* took), and of the melody master who made Broadway a century too late, Franz Schubert.

Even if you've never bought a record or been to Carnegie Hall, you'll soon find yourself talking back to your uppity friends of the collectors cult about the sonata form, Bach's jazz-type figured bass, your favorite German *Lieder,* or Debussy's screwy scales. . . . And you'll find it's more darn fun!

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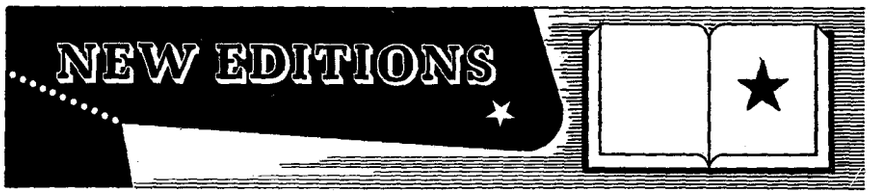

ON MY table is a group of books, newly arrived there, products of a single press. I pick one up, open it, and read: "Now at the end of this Valley was another, called the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and Christian must needs go through it, because the way to the Celestial City lay through the midst of it." Then I open a second, and read: "By the shores of Gitche Gumee, By the shining Big-Sea-Water, Stood the wigwam of Nokomis. . . ." And a third: "It was many and many a year ago, In a kingdom by the sea. . . ." A fourth: "And I had done a hellish thing, And it would work 'em woe. . . ." A fifth: "The Gothic cathedral is a blossoming in stone subdued by the insatiable demand of harmony in man." And, finally, a sixth: "Seek not to have things happen as you choose them, but rather choose them to happen as they do, and you shall live prosperously."

But this is extraordinary, I exclaim. These are some of the very books through which I first discovered literature, over which I hunched as a small boy and a growing youth, whenever unopened volume held infinite promise, creating an excitement in the expectant mind that was scarcely to be borne. Here are a few of the authors who made one late for meals and resentful of home-work; with whom is firmly associated the parental warning: "Be careful, dear, you must be ruining your eyes." Here are Bunyan, Longfellow, Poe, Coleridge, Emerson, Epictetus.

But they are here with a difference. When I first met them, they were for the most part badly dressed: they were either shabby or pretentious. Longfellow, I remember, was barely legible between ugly green covers, while Emerson was stiff and stately in the full panoply of a Library Edition. Epictetus was a queer little fellow who fitted into the palm of one hand. Poe, in many volumes, wore a leather that was imitation, destined to flake and break. But in their latest incarnations, they are all freshly, brightly, fitly garbed: thanks to Peter and Edna Beilenson, proprietors of the Peter Pauper Press, of Mount Vernon, New York.

You probably know this press. If not, you should. The Beilensons have been making fine books for quite a few years now; accomplishment enough for anyone. But they have done even more. While keeping their standards high, even raising them, they have held their prices down despite a mounting tide of costs. As a consequence, Peter Pauper gives his patrons really astonishing value for their money. The Beilensons use sound rag papers, attractive typefaces (Estienne, Weiss, Janson, Baskerville) and achieve remarkable variety in their designs, every one of which is an interesting, and usually beautiful, solution of a book-making problem. Their patterned board bindings are gay and less perishable than they at first appear (each is protected by an artistically labeled slip-case), while their illustrators happily adorn the text instead of burdening or overshadowing it.

Yet, of the books from which I have quoted, only "Emerson's Essays," set with classic dignity in Estienne types, with two-color woodengravings by Hans Alexander Mueller, costs as much as $3.50. The others —"The Pilgrim's Progress," with reproductions of woodcuts from early English editions; "The Song of Hiawatha," decorated by Valenti Angelo; "The Poems of Edgar Allan Poe," illustrated by Mr. Mueller; "The Ancient Mariner," with more excellent Mueller engravings; and "The Discourses of Epictetus," translated by T. W. Rolleston—sell for $2 each.

That is the present price for all but a few Peter Pauper books, including five more that are on my table now; five that do not take me back to my earliest reading. This quintet comprises "The Songs of Sappho," translated by several hands, decorated by Paul McPharlin; "Chinese Fairy Tales," illustrated by Sonia Roetter; "Chinese Love Poems," decorated by Mr. McPharlin; "Libertine Lyrics," an anthology, with lively decorations by one Anthony Amour; and "Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the United Nations," bravely, cleanly, hopefully printed from Electra types, on Ticonderoga paper, in an edition limited to 2375 copies. The "Sappho," a happy synthesis of earlier editions, is a delightful reading copy; the Chinese tales and poems are charming; "Libertine Lyrics" is an admirable selection, although I miss Carew's "A Rapture"; and the Charter reads, at least, wonderfully well. But the formula for Security Council voting is a monkey wrench in the works.

BEN RAY REDMAN.

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PERSONALS

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(Continued on page 42)

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PERSONALS

(Continued from page 41)

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TEACHER, veteran, wishes to act as companion, interpreter, driver for summer trip to Mexico. Box 464-T.

YOUNG MAN, 30, would like position in book-greeting card store with option to buy. Preferably Greenwich Village. Box 375-T.

PHILATELIST-RESEARCHER will buy 19th-Century correspondence (envelopes, letter sheets, etc,) and stamp collections. Your attic may hold material valuable to me—and you. References furnished. Write or send. Charles Hahn, 5317 Kimbark, Chicago 15, Illinois.

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SHOULD ANYONE OWN ANY manuscript letters by John Clare, the 19th-Century English poet, I should be happy to be able to secure a photostatic copy. Box 459-T.

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WOULD LIKE TO CORRESPOND with young man interested in psychology, literature, music, art. Box 462-T.

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PLEASANT WEEKENDS—try cryptograms; fun to solve! Remit $1.25 to Abigail, Box 1188-L, Greenwich, Conn.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 683

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

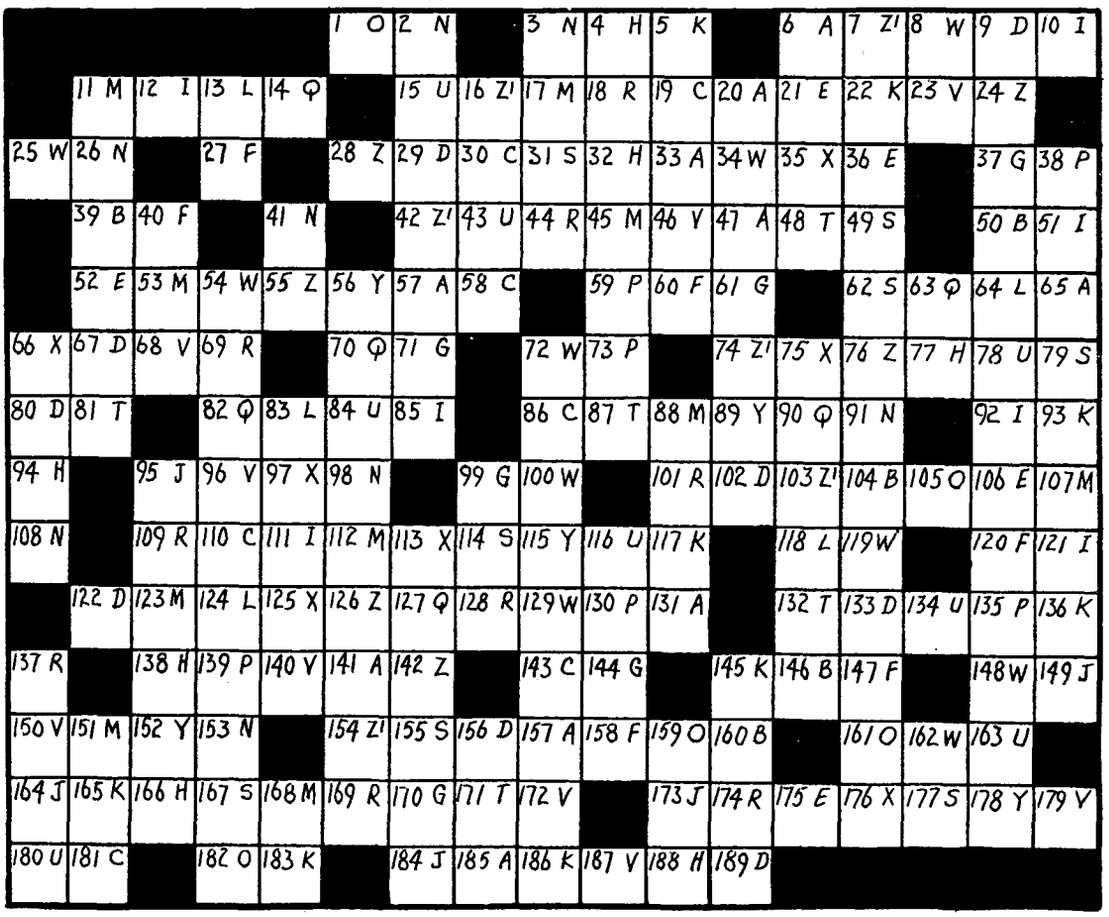
DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Unconcerned; indifferent.	65 157 20 33 141 57 47 6 131 185
B. A holy sage; an inspired poet (Hinduism).	160 39 104 146 50
C. Vacillated between different courses of action or the like.	110 19 86 143 30 58 181
D. Overbearing; domineering; lordly.	80 122 133 102 9 156 29 67 189
E. English poet (1880-).	106 21 36 175 52
F. American painter and sculptor (1844-1916; reliefs on battle monument, Trenton, N. J.).	147 27 158 120 60 40
G. Fine, thin, corded cotton fabric used for dresses.	61 99 170 37 71 144
H. Common wild duck of the Northern hemisphere.	166 138 32 77 4 188 94
I. Mother of Manasseh and Ephraim (Bib.; Gen.).	92 121 10 51 111 85 12
J. A loop with a running knot.	149 173 184 164 95
K. Any woman supposed to have a spirit of divination.	22 183 145 186 165 93 136 5 117
L. First name in title (with *Word N* below) of novel by Arnold Bennett (2 wds.).	83 118 64 124 13
M. To introduce or commend to favor.	17 45 88 112 151 168 53 107 11 123
N. Last name in title, with *Word L* above.	108 2 26 98 3 41 153 91

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
O. A religion of sorcery and magic ritual practised formerly by Negroes of B. W. I. and elsewhere.	105 182 159 161 1
P. An impecunious idler posing as a gentleman (Anglo-Ir.).	73 38 59 139 135 130
Q. Of or in repose.	63 82 70 127 90 14
R. Mournful; sad; melancholy.	101 18 109 44 137 128 169 174 69
S. Elevation; title of honor given to people of rank.	177 31 49 155 114 167 79 62
T. Seat in Germany of former Krupp iron works.	87 81 132 171 48
U. An ecstatic or highly emotional utterance or literary work.	180 43 84 15 116 134 163 78
V. An improvised bed, as one made on the floor with bedclothes over straw.	172 23 179 46 187 63 140 150 96
W. Roman rhetorician and educator (35-100?).	34 148 72 162 119 129 54 25 8 100
X. Not tested by experience.	35 75 66 176 125 113 97
Y. First name of popular correspondent killed in the Pacific (W. W. II).	178 152 56 89 115
Z. Firm in standing or position.	28 126 55 76 142 24
Z'. To frustrate or defeat.	42 16 7 74 103 154

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 27 of this issue.

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